

EDWARD SWARBRECK HALL

MEDICAL SCIENTIST AND SOCIAL
REFORMER IN COLONIAL TASMANIA

by

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submitted in fulfilment of the requirements
for the degree of

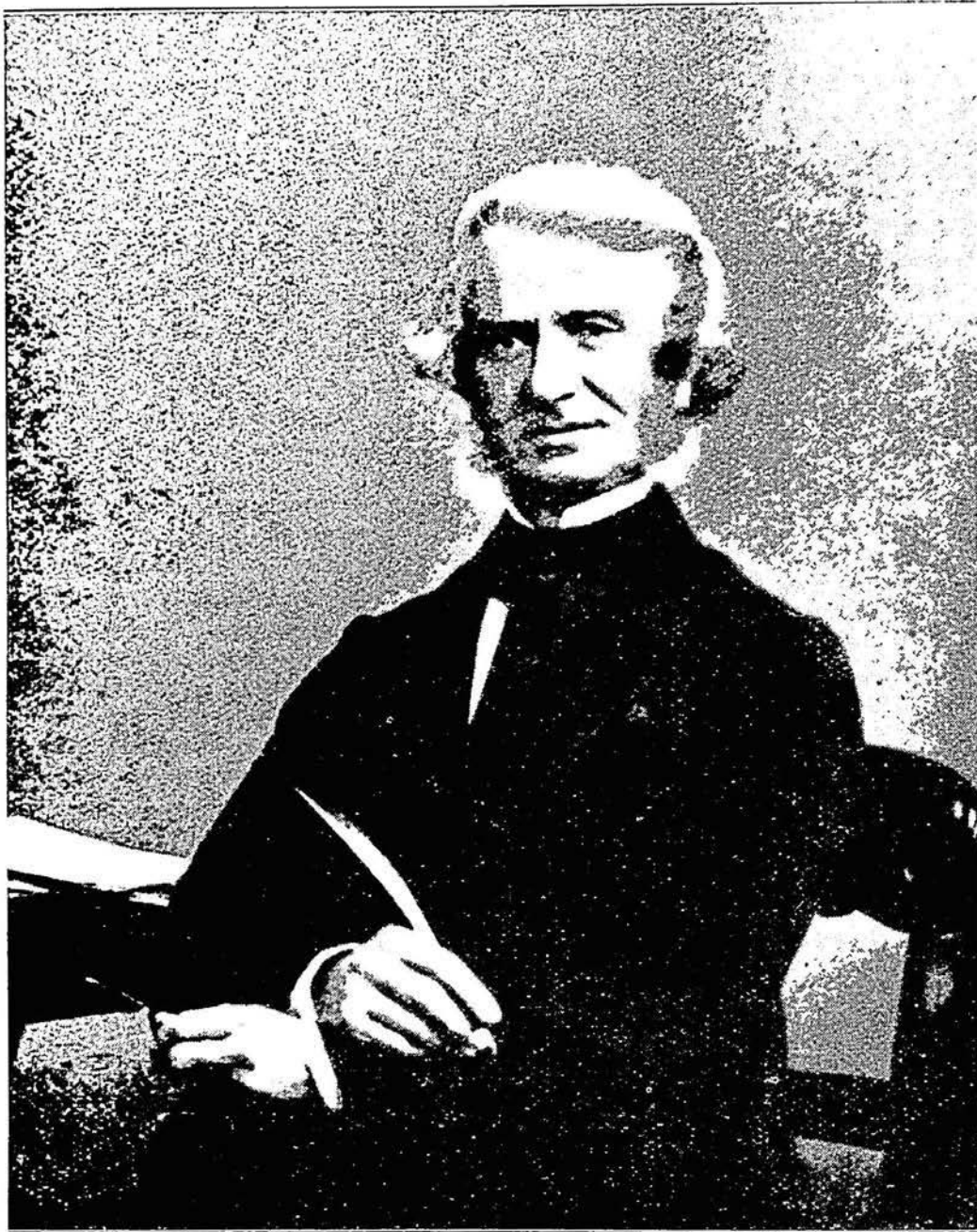
Master of Arts

UNIVERSITY OF TASMANIA

HOBART

December, 1976

The logo of the University of Tasmania, featuring a stylized tree or plant.



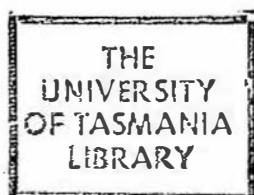
EDWARD SWARBRECK HALL. M.R.C.S.

"WHATEVER BETIDE, FOR THE RIGHT !"

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INTRODUCTION

On January 15, 1933, Harold Latham of Auckland Road, Greenmeadows, New Zealand, wrote to his cousin, Leventhorpe Hall, in Tasmania:

On 25th August, 1933, you will celebrate the hundredth anniversary of your family landing in Hobart. I read in the last Mail you sent those extracts from old letters which gave such a clear picture of conditions as they were in those days and in which you must all have shared for years; all the hardships of pioneer days made worse by the brutal convict system which your grand old fighting father did so much to lessen, even against official authority. I hope a fitting commemoration will be made on the above date of the part the Hall family took in the making of Tasmania as she is today.¹

Some years later, on a more formal note, W.E.L.H. Crowther in an Archibald Watson Memorial Lecture said:

The work of Dr E.S. Hall, M.R.C.S., L.S.A., during many years of practice in Van Diemen's Land and as the pioneer epidemiologist of the Australian Colonies (Cumpston 1923) is yet to be fully recognised. A member of the Old Religion and an utterly loyal son of his Church, he became the best known Catholic layman in our Island. Simple and humane he worked primarily for the good of the orphans, the poor and the outcast and exemplified the conception of a christian gentleman. His published work is of great scientific interest and value; and, an ardent bibliophile, he published in his latter years a book entitled "Who Translated the Bible" in support of the early teaching of his Church.²

An attempt has been made now with this study of Hall's life to fill a long standing gap in Tasmania's history. The task was very rewarding; not just an academic exercise, but a duty owed to Hall's memory and to Tasmania's heritage. As the story speaks for itself, it needs little introduction.

However, there are some features of the work which I would like to explain.

¹ Hall Papers, NS 308/4/20/3.

² W.E.L.H. Crowther, "A Background to Medical Practice and the Training of Surgical Apprentices and Pupils in Van Diemen's Land", The Australian and New Zealand Journal of Surgery, Vol. XXI, 1951-2, p. 198.

Firstly: In the beginning it was my intention to write a comprehensive biography. Such an aim proved to be impossible owing to the mass of material available and the need for continuity in the story. My approach to Hall's religious life, therefore, has been inconsistent. Where religious interests dominated his activities, as they did in Westbury and Oatlands, I have drawn attention to them - in the case of Oatlands at considerable length. However, after his return to Hobart Town in the early fifties, although he quickly became the Chief Catholic Layman, I have mentioned his work in that area very little; any more would have interrupted the story of his social, welfare and medical work. Consequently, this important aspect of his life, remarkable in itself, has been left for someone else to write. At the same time it should not be forgotten that his religious faith was the inspiration for his other work.

Secondly: Many direct quotations are included deliberately contrary, perhaps, to the accepted practice. Hall's numerous publications and his many letters to the press constitute a unique contribution to Tasmaniana. Unfortunately they are scattered in libraries in Australia and in England and are difficult to obtain. Since this is an unhappy oversight and a loss to Tasmania, which should be corrected, the inclusion of extracts may show the variety and quality of his writing and incite an interest in a collection of his work.

Thirdly: This study has been written from a woman's viewpoint; included sometimes are details which might be considered unnecessary to the main theme, though meaningful and interesting to women. However, detail has been included only when it stressed a point I wished to make.

Fourthly: I am aware that I may be accused of being over-sympathetic towards Hall. As I do not think this is a fair criticism, I wish to forestall it. Indeed, I have often felt that I have underscored, in the interests of moderation and disciplined writing, the part he played. Certainly, no other man held the stage in Hobart Town for so long and so consistently as he did from 1855 to 1881. For many months after I began research I doubted and looked for the flaw in his character. At no time did I find it; nor did I find any lessening of his mental or moral strength, no matter what his age. Hence I came to trust his faith and loyalty to his cause, just as the people of Hobart Town did. In this present age of cynicism, materialism and permissiveness, we are apt to forget the idealism, enthusiasm and vigour of the pioneering spirit which inspired men like Edward Swarbreck Hall.

The writing of this work has been a privilege.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to thank all those who have assisted me in this work. Although it is not possible to name them all, I would like to mention especially the following:- Dr M. Roe of the Department of History, University of Tasmania, for suggesting the topic, for reading the manuscript and for his advice; Mrs M. Nicholls for introducing me to available sources of material in Hobart; the Staff of the Archives Office of Tasmania; Mr G. Stilwell; Sir William Crowther; Mr J. Thornton of St. Bartholomew's Hospital Library for the gift of his book on J. Abernethy, and the Staff of the Wellcome Research Foundation for Medical History, London. I would particularly like to thank the Interloan Section of the Tasmanian University Library and the History Department for their assistance in obtaining articles by E.S. Hall. Also, I wish to thank the typists of the History Department for typing the first draft of the thesis and Mrs Rosalyn Behrens for her invaluable work in typing the final copy. Lastly I wish to thank my son, Philip, for his insistence some years ago that I put my time to better use and my husband, Leslie, whose encouragement and financial support made it possible for me to do this work.

E.F. Haynes

December, 1976.

ABBREVIATIONS

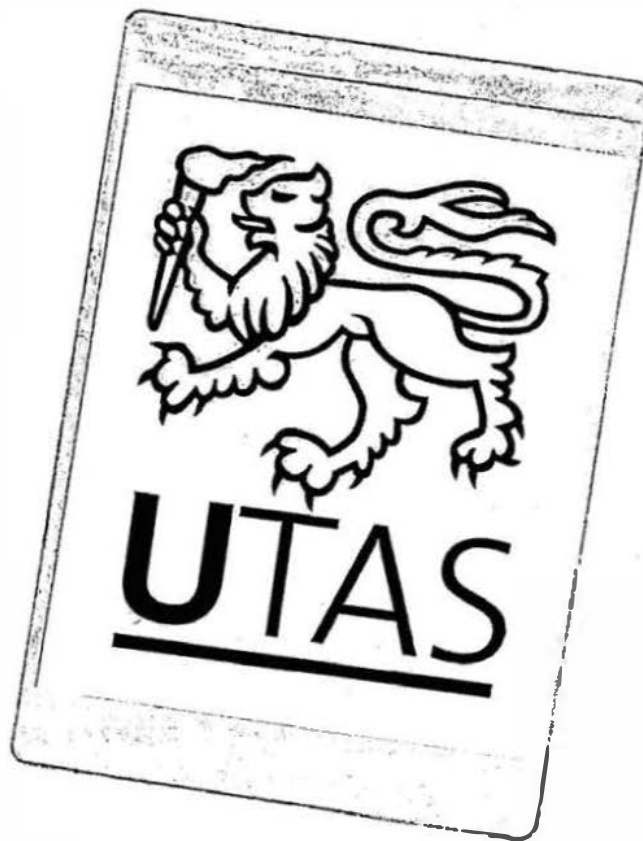
CSO & CSD	Colonial Secretaries' Office (or Department) Papers, followed by the series, volume and page numbers.
G01 & GO 33	Governors' Inward and Outward despatches followed by the volume and page numbers.
G046	Reports to the Governors by the Convict Department, followed by the volume and page numbers.
E.C.	Executive Council Records.
Con.	Convict Records.
Cen.	Census Records.
H.A.P.	House of Assembly Papers.
L.C.J.	Legislative Council Journals.
A.M.J.	Australian Medical Journal.
P.P.R.S.	Papers & Proceedings of the Royal Society of Tasmania.
Trans. Epid. Soc.	Transactions of the Epidemiological Society.
A.O.T.	Archives Office of Tasmania.
Tas. Col.	Tasmanian Collection.
V.	Volume.
pp.	Pages.

UTAS

S E C T I O N O N E

THE CONVICT RÉGIME

1834 - 1853



SECTION ONE

THE CONVICT RÉGIME

1834 - 1853

CHAPTER 1

ARRIVAL IN HOBART TOWN

In 1800 Richard Hall, aged twenty-nine, the son of John Hall of Coppy House, Yorkshire, and grandson of Henry Hall of Leventhorpe Hall, Yorkshire, settled in Liverpool as a merchant. He lived at Carnavon Hall, Lancashire, until his death on September 25, 1825, at Westby near Kirkham. He and his wife, Elizabeth Swarbreck, already had three children: Alice born in 1794, James 1797, and William 1799. After they settled in Liverpool, four more sons were born: Richard 1800, John whose date of birth and life are not known, Edward Swarbreck November 13, 1804, and Henry 1807. It is Edward Swarbreck, the sixth child and fifth son, with whom this study is concerned.

Both parents claimed descent from ancient and honoured families. The Hall family coat-of-arms named Rodolph, Count of Hapsburg and Emperor of Germany in 1273, the founder of the family. In 1283 Rodolph's son, Albert, was Duke of Austria and later became Emperor of Germany. In 1310 Albert's son, Frederick, was living in the Tyrol with the title "Lord of Halle" from whence the family later adopted the surname "Hall". Frederick's son, Sir Frank Hall, entered the service of Edward III of England in 1344, and was joint Marshall with Sir Walter Manny of the army of the Duke of Lancaster in the war of Guienne; he was one of the heroes of Poitiers, serving with the Black Prince, the fortieth knight of the Garter, and the Governor of Calais. In 1399 Sir Frank Hall's grandson, Robert Hall, served under Henry IV. He married the heiress to Sir John Leventhorpe and founded the family of Halls of Leventhorpe Hall, which became one of the most eminent in the county until the end of the eighteenth century, with its members frequently representing Lord Mayor of York.

Elizabeth Swarbreck was descended from the noble, German-born Edward Van Schwartzbreck, who in 1689 together with his "uterine" brother,

Arnold Joost Von Keppell, (afterwards Earle of Albermarle), accompanied William III to England. He married Alice Gaunt who was descended from Gilbert de Gaunt, Earl of Lincoln, cousin to William the Conqueror, and lived at Singleton in Lancashire. His son, James, married Alice Porter who became the mother of Elizabeth, the wife of Richard Hall and grandmother of Edward Swarbreck.¹

Hall's childhood and adolescence are obscure: he did not refer to his early life, nor is it mentioned in any family papers. However, he was reared in the Roman Catholic faith, and at an early age determined the course his future life would take.

From my boyhood, I resolved, to the best of my power, with the help of God, to act up to the Divine Command so well embodied in that grand old English axiom, 'Whatever betide for the right'.²

The first test of his resolve came at the age of twenty when he lost his heirship to a large cotton plantation in Georgia, U.S.A., because he let it be known that he would free all his slaves and provide for them on taking possession of the property. Certainly, Hall's choice of medicine as a career was to provide him with many more opportunities in later life to uphold his resolution. He studied medicine in Liverpool, at the School of the Royal College of Surgeons, Dublin, Ireland, and at St. Bartholomew's Hospital Medical College in London. The notes of a course of lectures which he attended on the "Theory and Practice of Surgery", given by Prof. Colles in Dublin in the winter of 1825-6, written in neat, careful handwriti

student in Dublin, he lived for many years with a prominent Presbyterian family which was often visited by eminent Presbyterian dignitaries from all parts of the United Kingdom. Towards the end of his life he wrote of himself at this time:

Here he had his feelings
table of the many stale and unfounded accusations against the principles and practices of the Catholic Church; and hereby he was led to examine the data for and against them with more zeal than youths not educating for the Priesthood usually can devote to such studies.³

¹ Hall Papers. NS 308/1/2.

² E.S. Hall, Reply to Testimonial, Mercury, June 9, 1881.

³ E.S. Hall, Who Translated the Bible, (Hobart Town, 1875), Preface.

Possibly his intense emotional distress was responsible for his life-long devotion and loyalty to the Catholic Church.

Hall probably found the time in London more rewarding and stimulating. St. Bartholomew's, the oldest hospital in London, founded in 1123 A.D. by Rahere, had achieved a great reputation in the early part of the nineteenth century for the superiority of its medical college, due mainly to the work of Dr John Abernethy, who was regarded as its founder. As Abernethy did not retire from lecturing duties until July 9, 1830, it is possible that Hall came under his influence. Sir Norman Moore wrote:

John Abernethy deserves a foremost place in the history of St. Bartholomew's as the greatest teacher, the most lucid expositor, the most eloquent lecturer of his time and who was the chief founder in London of the teaching of anatomy in relation to surgery and of surgery in relation to general pathology.⁴

Again, Sir Benjamin Brodie wrote:

He kept our attention so that it never flagged and what he told us could never be forgotten. He did not tell us so much as some other lecturers, but what he did, he told us well. His lectures were full of original thought, of luminous and almost poetical illustrations, the tedious details of descriptive anatomy being occasionally relieved by appropriate and amusing anecdote. Like most of his pupils, I was led to look up to him as being of a superior order and I could conceive nothing better than to follow in his footsteps.⁵

With such a master the serious young doctor surely would have left St. Bartholomew's in 1827 well equipped for his future career. His professional qualifications were "Licentiate of the Worshipful Society of Apothecaries and Member of the Royal College

Hall returned to Liverpool where he set up a private medical practice. Generous and well intentioned, he presented the first professional fee he earned, a golden one, to an orphanage. His experiences left such an indelible impression on his mind that in later years he often referred to this period in his life. Here, in the back streets of Liverpool, he first came into contact with the poverty, the filth and unhealthiness of slum life in a large industrial city, and was introduced to those zymotic diseases, especially smallpox and typhoid fever, against which he fought all his life. At the same time he acted as Honorary Doctor to a large children's institution, as a result of which he became aware of

⁴ Quoted J.L. Thornton, John Abernethy, (London, 1953), p. 41

the peculiar problems of those orphan and destitute children who were herded together in large numbers, and realized the importance of diet and nutrition in relation to health.

Yet Liverpool was not to be the setting for his life's work. At Wavertree, on June 8, 1831, Hall married Mary Latham, born February 21, 1807, the eldest of the seventeen children of Dr John Latham whom he described as

a fine, old gentleman, a venerable specimen of the medical professional gentleman of old times, with his powdered hair, a Latham of the ancient and notable Lancashire family of that name.⁶

It was a double wedding, Richard Hall marrying Frances. Little is known of Mary Hall, who was described by Harold Latham as "a typical, beautiful, English gentlewoman".⁷ The marriage was undoubtedly a happy one: fifty years later, on the occasion of their Golden Wedding Anniversary, Hall said:

Few can look back to half a century of wedded life with more satisfaction than we can do. From the commencement, on the 8th June, 1831, every object of professional or other ambition, fame and worldly success was made subordinate to domestic happiness. Home, sweet home has been ever the centre of attraction to us both.⁸

However, time and fate did not always treat the Halls kindly. In the first two years of their marriage, two sons were born; the elder, Reginald, died when nine days old, the second was stillborn.⁹ Hall, too, while travelling near Liverpool, was held up by highwaymen and robbed; in the ensuing hearing for the rest of his life.¹⁰ But more disturbing still, Mary's health, delicate for many years previously, began to fail alarmingly, causing her husband and her father to agree that, unless she left Liverpool, one of the most unhealthy towns in England, at once, she would die of tuberculosis. Faced with a desperate situation, the Halls decided to emigrate to Van Diemen's Land to a climate more favourable to health and life, although Mary's family thought that she would not survive the long journey to the other side of the world.

Hall did not give his reasons for selecting Van Diemen's Land as his future home. However, there was much discussion at the time of the

⁶ Hall, Reply.

⁷ Hall Papers, 308/4/20/3.

⁸ Hall, Reply.

⁹ Hall Papers, NS 308/1/3.

¹⁰ Hall, Reply.

suitability of the island for migration. Usually the climate was commended as more conducive to health than the damp English winter; many diseases, such as smallpox and cholera, which caused so much destruction of life in England, were unknown in the colony. Dr James Scott R.N. of the Hobart Town Hospital contributed an article in 1824 to the London Medical and Physical Journal, in which he showed the diseases prevailing in the colony in the different months of the year. In his remarks accompanying the report, he commented upon the climatic conditions:

.... respecting the medical topography of the country, I have to observe that it is not less peculiar in this respect than it is in its vegetable and animal productions as situations are here enjoyed with health and pleasure which anywhere else would be considered as inevitable destruction or hazardous to human life. And, although the vicissitudes of the thermometer from heat to cold and of the barometer from clear weather to foul, are frequent and sudden, they are not succeeded by the same baneful consequences to the human body as in other countries; nor are these changes followed by an epidemic or contagious diseases, which as yet can scarcely be said to have appeared.... The diseases both acute and chronic are generally mild and of short duration and yield more easily to the usual remedies than in any other country with which I am acquainted....

Scott finished his article with high praise of the island's climate:

.... such is the salubrity of the climate to Europeans that the stamina of their constitutions, after a short residence, becomes renovated and invigorated enabling many to become useful members of society, who were never so before. In short the valetudinarian, searching for health, will nowhere find a climate and country more congenial to his wishes than V.D.L.¹¹

In spite of misgivings concerning the outcome of the journey, the Halls sailed from Liverpool on Tuesday, May 7, 1833, bound for Hobart Town. Their ship was the "Cabotia", registered in Liverpool, of three hundred and eighty-eight tons, under the command of Captain H. Cummings, with a crew of twenty-one. Carrying two guns for protection, her purpose was to deliver a consignment of general cargo to Hobart Town and Sydney. In addition, the "Cabotia" carried one hundred and fifty-eight passengers, most of whom travelled steerage class. The luckier and more favoured cabin-class passengers were Edward and Mary Hall; Robert Von Steiglitz and his wife; William Turner and his wife; and Miss and Master Dixon, - all bound for Hobart Town. Bound for Sydney were Thomas Black, his wife and

J. Scott, 'Medical Report of His Majesty's Colonial Hospital, Hobart Town, Van Diemen's Land, for the years 1821 and 1822, showing the Prevailing Diseases of the Colony in different months', London Medical and Physical Journal, Vol. 51, 1824, p. 519.

four children; John Fotheringham and William Plaister and his wife. Of these Hall, Black and Fotheringham were surgeons emigrating to Australia. In the steerage were thirty-five adults and sixteen children who were disembarking

children who were leaving the ship at Sydney.

The journey from Liverpool to Hobart Town occupied a little over eleven weeks. For Mary Hall, indeed, the decision to emigrate was a fortunate one. Contrary to the expectations of her family, her health gradually improved during the long sea voyage and she arrived in Van Diemen's Land alive and well. Never again in her subsequent long life did she ever show the symptoms of the disease which had almost destroyed her in England and which did, indeed, cause the death of her two younger sisters who remained in Liverpool. Hall described their arrival in Hobart Town on August 25, 1833, in his "Reminiscences" which he wrote on August 25, 1878, on the forty-fifth anniversary of that momentous day.

After a tedious voyage from England we cast anchor in the harbour of Hobart Town late on Saturday night. Our first sight of the island was South-West Cape, and we gazed eagerly and admiringly on the bold coast of our future home. Storm Bay on the occasion verified its appellation, for we had a succession of squalls, in one of which we lost some spars. Sunday morning broke sunny and fine, and Mount Wellington looked grand to us indeed with its ample mantle of snow. We landed immediately after breakfast on the jetty of the Old Wharf, and walked by the shore to an inn in Murray-street, whence, having secured quarters, we proceeded to attend Mass at the rude, barn-like building which then served for the only Catholic place of worship in the island. It was situated close behind the Presentation Convent. It was built of brick, unceiled, unplastered, and floored with loose warped boards, which would fly up by a careless tread on their extremities; their edges were very sharp to the knees of the worshippers, and only a few forms to sit upon. Father Philip Connolly was then the only priest in the whole island, and we found him after our muddy trudge, pacing, as was his usual custom, outside the chapel to watch the arrivals. He at once welcomed us heartily; having no doubt that we were fresh arrivals by one of the two vessels that had arrived from England the previous evening. We presented our letters of Catholicity from our English director, and after a little chat, he took us to a room near the vestry door, saying that he heard the soldiers coming, and that service would commence after their arrival. At that time there were two regiments in Hobart Town, the 21st and 66th, and many of them Catholics. The chapel was densely crowded, and the service and accessories altogether of a rude and primitive character, and when Father Connolly thrust his way among the people with an old hat to make the collection at the offertory, my better half, who had been accustomed only to the decorous and solemn services of England was astounded. After Mass we were invited into the vestry, which was also Father Connolly's sitting room, his rude dwelling being only a lean-to against the chapel. Here we were introduced to Mr Cornelius Driscoll, then Assistant Colonial Secretary,

Lieutenant Robertson, an officer in an Indian Cavalry Regiment on sick furlough (father to Mrs Henry Hunter), and Lieutenant Small, a retired officer of a line regiment, with his family of daughters, etc. Returning to our inn we were delig

except the At that time there was a fine large garden from the corner of Macquarie to Collins streets, where Webb's it had a high hedge of sweet-briar, which was then just breaking into leaf, and s the north of England used to be sold in pots as hot-house varieties. Almonds and peach trees were also in blossom, and many garden flowers. The contrast between these and the wintry aspect of Mount Wellington surprised but gratified us, and made such an impression upon us, that forty-five years have not dissipated. Next day we were surprised with the visit from a Catholic gentleman, who had held an appointment in the large charitable institution of our native town to which I was one of the honorary medical officers. I was not aware that he was in this part of the world; he was then an assistant to the father of the present Hon. W.L. Crowther. Subsequently he practised in Hobart Town, and ultimately removed to Victoria, where he made a fine fortune, and attained an excellent position. He was Mr J.P. Rowe.¹²

Pleased with their first acquaintance with Hobart Town, Hall had now to earn a living. On Friday, September 27, 1833, a local newspaper, the Courier, carried a notice:

Mr Edward Swarbreck Hall, Member of the Royal College of Surgeons and Licentiate of the Worshipful Society of Apothecaries, London, informs the inhabitants of Hobart Town and neighbourhood that he has taken up his residence in the house lately occupied by Captain Briggs in Elizabeth St., adjoining the main Guard House, where he intends practising all the branches of the medical profession.

Mr Hall was educated in the first medical schools of both the Irish and English metropolis and has subsequently been in private practice six years, during five of which he was honorary surgeon to one of the most extensive charities in the United Kingdom.

Elizabeth Street, September 25th, 1833.

The advertisement was repeated in the Colonist on October 8, 15 and 22.

¹² E.S. Hall, "The Catholic Church in Tasmania, No. III, Collections and Recollections, Reminiscences of Catholicity in Tasmania [By an old resident]", The Catholic Standard, May, 1879.

CHAPTER 2

HOBART TOWN

In 1833 Hobart presented a pleasant, surprising, and rather odd appearance to the newcomer arriving direct from England. Certainly, it was difficult to believe that only thirty years before forest and scrub had occupied the site where the town now stood. Nestling at the foot of the impressive, dominating Mount Wellington, and gracing the broad estuary of the Derwent River at a point some twenty miles from its mouth, the town displayed a beauty rarely encountered. Its harbour, often dotted with tall-masted sailing ships, was one of the best and most secure in the world. The town which was built on ground gently rising from the water's edge, already covered more than one square mile, its skyline dominated by the tall, red-brick edifice of a church, its wide, long, intersecting streets fronted by several large, well-built shops and handsome houses. Almost through its centre ran the Hobart Rivulet weaving its way from the steep hills below Mount Wellington to the Derwent, a source both of power to industries and a water supply to the inhabitants. Behind well-kept, tastefully laid out shrubberies which sloped to the water's edge, stood the rambling

altered as the occasion demanded. Here lived Lieutenant-Governor Sir George Arthur; since May 12, 1824, the British Government's representative and arbiter of the colony's destiny. Dotted here and there were numerous public buildings: the stone court house catering for the Supreme Court, the Court of Quarter Sessions, the Court of Requests and the Registrar of the Supreme Court; in the centre the Police Office; to the south west the Military Barracks built in a fine commanding position; to the east the Hospital and the Prisoners' Barracks, a large number of red brick buildings surrounded by a high wall; in Macquarie Street near the water's edge, the Commissariat and the Ordinance Building. Beside the waterfront stood a row of tall, well-built warehouses forever busy as the ships disgorged their cargoes of passengers and goods. Two miles away, in a

westerly direction, stood the Female House of Correction, commonly known as the Femal In

In addition, there were privately-owned homes and business houses like the Commercial and Derwent Banks in Macquarie Street, several other churches and some excellent inns. J. Ross recorded that in 1831 the population of Hobart Town was about six thousand, and that there were seven hundred and eighty-five houses, six corn mills, four breweries, two timber mills, a soap manufactory, about eight tanneries, a hat factory, a parchment making business and a ship building yard.¹ On the outskirts were many handsome villas enclosed by well kept gardens and orchards. William Russ Pugh, who later became a well-known Launceston doctor, exclaimed on his arrival in Hobart Town:

A stranger cannot feel otherwise than astonished when he observes the number of dwelling houses and thinks that it is little more than thirty years since the spot on which he stands was known only to the savage. The fruit trees are perfect pictures. I never saw apples in such numbers on one tree as I have seen since I arrived here.²

Arthur, reporting to the Secretary of State for the Colonies,

Edward G. Stanley, a few months earlier, on May 14, 1834, confirmed Pugh's opinion:

A taste for expensive houses and rich furniture is very prevalent and is daily gaining ground, and but for the alternation of costly houses of recent construction with such of the primeval huts as are still permitted to stand as memorials of the infancy of the colony - I do not know that there is anything in the appearance of Hobart Town or in the manner of living of the inhabitants that would suggest to the mind of the newly arrived emigrant that where Hobart now stands there was thirty years since nothing but a wilderness.³

On August 18, 1833, Arthur estimated the total population of Van Diemen's Land as approximately 26,694, of whom about 10,000 lived in Hobart and 4,446 in Launceston.⁴ He judged the increase of population in the towns at this time to be due to the existing regulations which made

¹ J. Ross, The Van Diemen's Land and Hobart-Town Almanack (Hobart Town, 1831), pp. 80-81, 92.

² Quoted The Illustrated Tasmanian Mail, Christmas Number, Dec. 6, 1934, from a MS of 1835 "Log Book and Journal on board the Barque, 'Derwent' - 360 tons - A. Riddell, Commander, on her voyage to New Holland" by Dr William Russ Pugh.

³ GO 33/17 p. 346.

⁴ GO 33/14 p. 438.

the attainment of land in the colony much more difficult, free grants having been discontinued since January 20, 1831. In addition, the population was continually increased by arrivals from England. Besides the convicts, of whom 2,674 arrived in 1833, there were numerous free immigrants. The Halls were two out of 2,345 free immigrants who arrived in Hobart Town in the period January 1 to December 31, 1833. Of these, 850 were men, 788 women and 707 children.⁵ Arthur considered that all were satisfactorily absorbed into the community, but not everyone in Hobart Town agreed

regretted the influx of poor migrants, who were becoming an object of pity and charity in their destitution as they wandered the streets unable to find employment. At the same time, there was no objection to the migration of skilled and active workers for whom there was plenty of employment if they had the energy and initiative to find it. The immigration of Edward Swarbreck and Mary was welcomed particularly by the Roman Catholic Church which was eager its ranks.

The Halls, intelligent, sociable and active, soon discovered the mores under which the small community functioned. The population was divided into two distinct classes, the free settler and the prisoner, each of which did its best to lead its life undisturbed by the other. The free settlers, again, were divided into lesser groups, with little communication from one to the other. At the head of the social hierarchy was Arthur, who, much to the annoyance of many of the colonists, regarded the colony purely as a penal settlement which it was his duty to administer as efficiently and economically as possible for the British Government. Close to him were those in Government positions, jeeringly called "The Aristocracy". More numerous still, wealthy and more influential, were the second class, unconnected with Government; these comprised the bankers, the merchants, the professional men, the pastoralists and well-to-do farmers, who were interested in cultural and moral values and were regarded as the respectable class, a good example to be followed. Lastly, there were the free persons of an inferior status, who provided a link between the second class and the laborer; here were grouped the small business men, the skilled artisans and the clerks. Arthur described the more industrious sections of the community:

⁵ GO 33/16 p. 145.

.... Notwithstanding the source from which it has in part sprung, it is exceedingly active and laborious and consequently prosperous.

and again:

.... Fortunately for the colony such a number of free immigrants of character and capital has arrived from the year 1822 to 1831 as to make a favorable impression upon and give a tone to society productive of the very best results.⁶

However, all groups of prisoners. Nevertheless, it was they for whom the colony was first settled and Arthur was determined that it should continue to serve this purpose irrespective of the wishes of the free settlers who were now in a position to foresee a better future. At the time of Hall's arrival, the system of assignment was still in operation: all persons transported to the colony, without reference to any previous circumstances whatever, were either placed in the Public Service or were assigned to private individuals immediately on arrival, according to their qualifications. Those who were assigned to the Public Service were lodged in the Prisoners' Barracks and allotted tasks according to their ability; mechanics and laborers formed a large section of this group; in return for their labor, they were fed, clothed and lodged by the Government. Only clerks who were employed in Public Offices were permitted to live privately, receiving five pounds a year, plus five pounds for clothing. All prisoners in the employ of the Crown were not permitted to spend any part of their time working for themselves, nor to possess any property. Those assigned to private individuals lived under his roof and were fed and clothed; they received no wages, were not allowed to work for themselves, nor permitted to go anywhere without a pass. The master, indeed, was completely responsible for their health and welfare, receiving cheap labor in return. Of course, such a system was open to considerable abuse, since much depended upon the character both of the master and the assigned servant. In cases of abuse, the convict had the right to appeal to a Police Magistrate and ultimately to the Governor; the master could always return the unwanted servant to the Government. No doubt, there were specific cases in which the assigned servants were badly treated, as communities breed all types of masters. But also, there were many instances in which assigned servants were better off in Van Diemen's Land than they would have been if they had remained in England. Women colonists, particularly, spoke of the devoted

⁶ GO 33/14 p. 444.

service which they received from their servants. Prisoners, whose characters and disposition made it impossible for them to be assigned, were confined in Hobart Town, the women at the Cascades Factory, the men at the Gaol.

Whatever the merits or defects of the system were, there was no doubt that the continual supply of cheap labour did much to foster the growth of the new colony. In 1833 Arthur was able to report:

Several of the mercantile men have become wealthy; there are individuals worth from twenty thousand pounds to thirty thousand pounds.⁷

Wool and the proceeds from the whale fishery were the staple products. It was still largely a primary producing community and Arthur felt that it would be some time before any manufactured goods would be available. However, good, fertile land, especially near the towns, was becoming scarce, making it difficult for the new immigrant unless equipped with plenty of capital. But for the settlers lucky enough to have concentrated on the growing of fine wool, the outlook in 1833 was reassuring. They were able to look forward to an income of one thousand to two thousand pounds a year, perhaps twice as much as that in some cases. The cheap labour provided by the assigned servants helped to make possible the mansions and the cultivated, leisurely way of life enjoyed by many of the free settlers. Pugh commented, no doubt with some surprise:

That you may have some conception of the style in which things are done here, I shall mention one house lately built in the town by a man, who, seven or eight years since, was almost penniless; the house has cost ten thousand pounds, the furnishing of it is to be another five thousand pounds, and to look at the man you would think that he is as badly off as ever.⁸

In 1833 Hobart Town was undergoing a rapid change. Besides the numerous buildings being erected at private expense, the Government had b. largest size to berth alongside the shore, without the necessity for the use of small boats. Yet, despite all the activity and the improvements, it was not possible for the newcomer to forget for long that Hobart Town was primarily a penal settlement, a fact which added a strange quality to its beauty as a town. J. Syme described his feelings as he first looked around:

⁷ GO 33/17 p. 34.

⁸ Pugh, quoted Mail.

But while you are on the way to your brief domicile, you cannot, if it is the first time you have landed here, but be struck with wonder at seeing six or seven men working and drawing along a moderate sized cart upon two wheels with a pole at the centre in front for its guidance and you observe their habiliments are grey jacket, trousers and vest, but others are composed of patches of black and yellow cloth with a black leather cap; these are prisoners of the crown, most of whom have, by misconduct after their arrival in the colony, been subjected to additional punishments and you observe a portion of the many that you pass are in chains, which are of the third or worst class of convicts, who have incurred that ignominy and debasement by encroachments on the public peace and defiance of the necessary restraint imposed upon these hapless beings.

Many new arrivals were deeply shocked at their first sight of fellow human beings.

ankles in such a way that freedom of movement was circumscribed. They felt themselves by the sheer act of observation to be infected with some of the degradation being suffered, no matter how well merited. Most people came to accept the clank of the chains and the sight of the broad arrow stamped on the grey or tawny uniforms as part of their daily lives. They adopted a commonsense viewpoint and went about their own affairs, doing their best to ignore a distasteful situation. However depressing and debasing the continual presence of chain gangs might be, the free settlers by 1833 had contrived to achieve some measure of security, which was further increased by the removal of danger to life and property from aborigines and bushrangers. Arthur wrote:

.... I am now enabled again to repeat the assertion that in Hobart Town property is as efficiently protected as in any other town with which I am acquainted in His Majesty's Dominions and the respectable inhabitants are as safe from any danger of insult.¹⁰

With personal safety secured and greater prosperity obtained by the success of the wool and whale industries, more time was devoted to pursuits other than earning a living. In their small, isolated community many settlers suffered from homesickness and hunger for news of the outside world, especially Britain. To supply such needs in 1834 there were six newspapers, two advertising papers, one official gazette, one magazine and two pocket almanacks; there were six printing offices employing eleven presses, four bookbinding establishments, two stationer's shops and two circulating libraries. In addition, the Mechanics' Institute, founded in 1827, was flourishing, providing weekly lectures on various topics; likewise

J. Syme, *Nine Years in Van Diemen's Land*, (Dundee, 1845), p. 12.

¹⁰ GO 33/17 p. 44.

the Church of England, the Wesleyans, the Presbyterians, the Independents and the Catholics provided services for their members. A public school for poor children was conducted by the Government, while several private seminaries catered for the more affluent class. By this time, too, some social responsibility towards orphan and destitute children was apparent: these were housed in temporary accommodation while a large orphan asylum was being built at New Town, two miles from Hobart Town. An Infant School Society, a Temperance Society, a Benevolent Society and some church missionary societies were also meeting specific needs. For more frivolous occasions there were races, balls and picnics. Hotels and inns provided comfortable town accommodation for country dwellers.

Politically, however, all was not well. There was much dissension between Arthur and some of the free settlers who were divided into two factions, those who supported the Governor and those who opposed. The latter disagreed with Arthur's opinion that the colony existed only for the control and reform of the prisoners and that the settlement of free men was subsidiary to this. Arthur was hostile to liberal ideas and resisted the liberty of the press, trial by jury and open discussion of legislative measures. Although supported by an executive of fifteen members, he was not required to take its advice unless he wished:

The settlers were expected to stay at home, to keep their servants in custody, to denounce their infractions of penal rules, and as, 'the material of prison discipline' (so they were denominated), to carry out a judicial sentence. They knew before they came they must sacrifice British rights, and with the political or social influences of transportation beyond their own fences, they had no concern.¹¹

Although Arthur's attitudes and intentions were correct and praiseworthy according to the terms of his appointment, many colonists were unable to see them in this light. There were many other reasons, too, for discontent in a small island where, for want of suitable comparisons, petty grievances and misfortunes became magnified into disasters. Accordingly, exaggeration, melodrama and controversy were often the tone and spirit of the day both in social intercourse and in the publications of the press.

The spirit of contention was promoted by the peculiar fabric of society. The great majority of the colonists were below the period of human life, when the temper becomes cautious and the

¹¹ J. West, History of Tasmania, (Launceston, 1852), Vol. 1, p. 179.

passions calm. Its narrow sphere magnifies their temporary importance. Every man might claim on forfeit benefits the government could bestow, and thus multitudes had personal grievances, or unsatisfied expectations. The hostilities of the day were almost invariably associated with some sense of individual wrong. A grant of land desired by one was given to another, a valuable servant was denied on some public pretence and then assigned to a favoured applicant. One found his mercantile tenders always rejected while another by some unintelligible process, engrossed the custom of the crown. A youthful stranger was invested with the honors of a justice, when colonists of long standing were left undistinguished. The infractions of rule involved one master in public disgrace, another was licensed transgressor. Such was the complaint, which might be easily illustrated by examples, but they are such as a knowledge of mankind will amply explain, and are inevitable when the form of government is arbitrary and where its functions enter into all the details of private life.¹²

In spite of social friction and the petty annoyances incurred by settlers in their dealings with prisoner servants, Hobart Town in 1833 was a "most delightful" and "agreeable" place in which to live, provided an income of two hundred pounds or more was available.¹³ There was a superabundance of food, meat, fish, poultry, vegetables, fruits of the best quality being always available. On May 10, 1833, the Courier commented upon the supply of foodstuffs:

A superabundant supply of farm produce of every description was again visible this day. Potatoes appeared in vast quantities and of excellent quality at prices ranging from 6/- to 12/-; cabbage 3d. per head; turnips, carrots 2d. per bunch, onions 2d. per lb; poultry same as last week, no demand - fruit in abundance, apples 10d. per dozen of a quality equal to the production of any country under the sun; maize 2/9 to 3/-; barley 2/6; oats, none, hay and straw same as last week.

However, the Governor considered that the cost of foodstuffs was high in 1833 - meat selling from 7d. to 9d. a lb. and wheat from 14/- to 16/- a bushell.¹⁴ In 1836 Syme reported that food prices had fallen somewhat, excellent meat now being obtainable from 3d. to 4d. a lb. In 1835, when he visited Sydney for a short period, Pugh made an interesting comment on other goods available in Hobart Town shops:

I learned that the Sydney market, like the Hobart Town, is glutted with merchandise of every description and that many of the articles are to be purchased at a price considerably below the original cost in London.¹⁵

¹² Ibid., p. 176.

¹³ Syme, p. 12.

¹⁴ GO 33/17 p. 399.

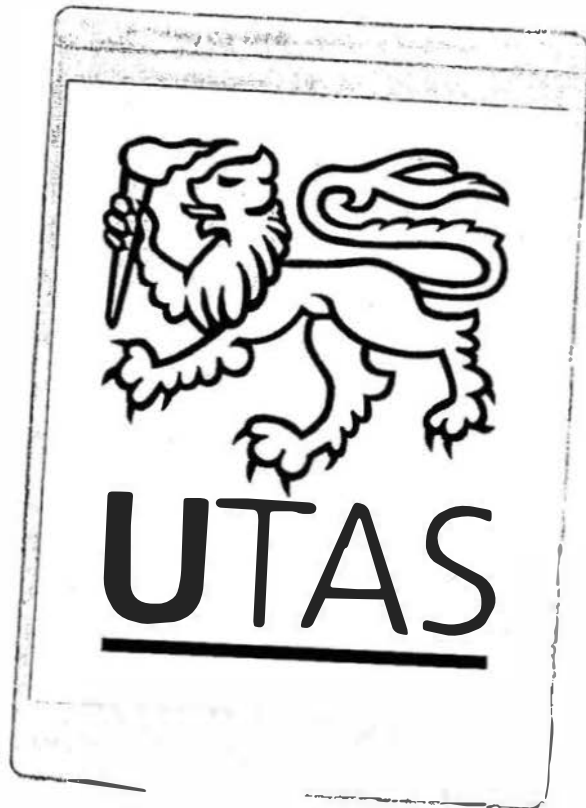
¹⁵ Pugh, quoted Mail.

On one point only, Government officials, settlers, prisoners and visitors, too, agreed. The climate of Van Diemen's Land was undoubtedly salubrious and beneficial to health, its summer temperatures greatly moderated, the mornings and evenings always cool, no matter how hot the mid hours might be. The winters, too, were moderated in their intensity by the presence of the vast oceans surrounding the island. Rain fell on an average no more than fifty or sixty days in the year; the sky was clear and brilliant, the atmosphere mostly dry, pure and elastic. Frosts were never very severe and snow seldom lay on the ground for very long. Although sudden, great changes of temperature frequently occurred, these were considered exhilarating rather than detrimental in such a pure, dry atmosphere. A climate such as this, plus the fact that survival in a new colony demanded an active life, produced a more vigorous, healthy way of living. The chances of life and longevity were considered to be twenty per cent better in Van Diemen's Land than in England. Persons arriving with their constitutions impaired frequently recovered quickly and were able to look forward to a longer, more useful life. Children born in the colony grew strong and tall with open countenances, the bright pink of health in their cheeks; even the prisoners, who arrived with diseased and emaciated bodies from the irregular and dissolute life they had led in England, found their health improved by the more regular life forced upon them and by the sufficiency of good and wholesome food. Many diseases so prevalent in other parts of the world were still unknown: although whooping cough had swept the island after its introduction by one of the female prison ships, it had been in a mild form; smallpox and measles had not occurred. Furthermore, no diseases peculiar to the island had yet been discovered. Fever and dysentery were probably the most common ailments, but no worse than anywhere else. It was noticed, however, that a protuberance on the neck, closely resembling the Swiss goitre, had been found in districts near New Norfolk and around Hobart. However, a healthy climate and the possibility of a more active and fortunate way of life were not always enough to counter the evils of heavy alcoholic drinking and intoxication. According to Ross:

The quantity of spirits, and other strong drink consumed annually in the colony, may on a moderate computation, be taken at not less than 10,000 gallons, which according to the population allows the enormous quantity of about 5 gallons to each individual, young and old, male and female in the island. So astounding a fact, shows at a glance the horrid state into which some of the community must be immersed.¹⁶

¹⁶ Ross, Almanack, 1831, p. 52.

In spite of the many deaths caused by alcoholism, Arthur, on August 18, 1833, reported to Stanley that the colony was rapidly advancing in health.¹⁷



¹⁷ GO 33/14 p. 444.

CHAPTER 3

THE MEDICAL CLIMATE

Unfortunately, Hall did not describe his experiences during his first year in Hobart Town and it is not known if he achieved any success in his private practice. However, it can be assumed that, in his position as a stranger to the community, his professional ability untested, he would incur the fortunes, or misfortunes, under which all doctors new to the community laboured at that time. The early thirties of the nineteenth century were not a happy time for those men, trained in the Medical Profession, who wished to migrate to Australia, especially if they chose Van Diemen's Land as their sphere. There were several reasons for this. Firstly, the population of the island was fairly small, requiring only a certain number of doctors to care for its health. With the exception of Hobart Town and Launceston, where population was more concentrated, the people lived in small, fairly isolated communities with considerable distances between them. One small community was not sufficient to support a doctor, nor was he able to travel the distance to care for another. Then, too, the health of the people generally was very good: fresh air, a vigorous country life, good wholesome food and freedom from the dreaded diseases found in England gave little cause for seeking medical aid. Many more doctors arrived than were required, many of them young men who were seeking a more adventurous and better way of life. Frequently, they acted as ship's surgeon on the voyage out, obtaining a free passage in return for their services.

Pugh, who acted as surgeon on the barque "Derwent" on her voyage to Australia about this time, recounted his experiences in Van Diemen's Land with some bitterness. On presenting his letters of introduction in Hobart Town, he was informed that the Medical Profession was entirely overdone in the colony and, unless he could obtain a Government appointment, there was no opening.

Never did I feel in such complete solitude in the haunts of my fellow men. Everyone I meet casts a suspicious glance and passes on. Never was a man more at a loss what to do than I am, 16,000 miles away from those on whom I have been accustomed to rely when in difficulty, possessed of neither the money to permit me to remain idle, nor having a profession likely to avail me. Now do I wish that I had passed my youth in some business. I had then been differently circumstanced ... Indeed, I have cast off everything that time and relationship had rendered dear and stand alone not knowing where to bury myself.

Pugh decided to try his prospects in Sydney but found the situation just as unpromising as in Hobart Town. Depressed and not knowing in which direction to turn to become a useful member of society, he returned to Hobart Town in December, 1835, where he was advised to try the northern part of the island. He decided to make the journey on foot as it would be less expensive and enable him to make more enquiries on the route than he could do if he went by coach. At Oatlands he was amazed to find that the District Surgeon supported himself as much by horse dealing as by his profession; at Antill Ponds P. Harrison of Woodbury advised him that there was nothing worth attending to in the colonies but whale oil and wool; at Mona Vale W. Kermode declared that Pugh had brought his knowledge to a bad market as few doctors were needed and they were in excess; W. Archer also explained that he was anxious, in common with other old settlers, to induce respectable settlers to establish themselves in the colony, but then, as they were agreed that his profession was not worth thinking about here, they would say no more about it; instead, he recommended that Pugh take up sheep farming like so many other ships' captains and surgeons had done. Only Major Lord gave any encouragement by advising him to go to Launceston where a living could be had. Here Pugh found five doctors already established and several others in the neighbourhood.¹ His story, however, had a happy ending. He remained in Launceston where he achieved considerable success as a medical man, a naturalist and an amateur scientist.

In 1837, the English medical journal Lancet published a letter signed by "Medicus" who described an even unhappier experience:

Having lately returned from Australia where I was persuaded to go as the surgeon of a ship, for the expense of my passage, under the assurance of there being a great demand there for medical men through the medium of your much read journal, permit me to put young men on their guard against such an impudent imposition. The climate is the finest in the world; there is

an abundance of everything at a cheap rate; plenty of employment and the labourer is well paid. Raiment and fuel are almost not needed; they have there neither endemics or epidemics, and the consequence of all this is health of the highest order; and this the more marked from the improvement of the health of all emigrants, by the long voyage passed through, a fine climate all the way, cheerful society, rest, good living, and the hope of bettering their condition with the novelty of the charmingly changed scene and climate on arrival and hereafter. However, let no man go as a surgeon without ample remuneration, bargaining also to be brought back. If he do not do this, he must become a clerk or a cattle driver, or he must starve.²

Naturally those doctors who migrated to Van Diemen's Land and found their services not required, complained bitterly about the wrong impressions and false hopes given to them in England. One such doctor, signing himself "Anglicus", wrote to the Tasmanian in October, 1832, a letter which brought forth a spirited reply from "Veritas" in the Colonial Times on October 23, 1832:

The great influx of medical men into the colony during the last twelve months, appears to have produced those effects which have long been anticipated, viz disappointment, dissatisfaction and regret, and when we consider the rumours current in the Mother country, relative to these colonies, we cannot wonder that these gentlemen, with poverty staring them in the face, should complain; and that such of them as have labored in vain to obtain Government appointments, should proclaim themselves ill-treated. It is most certainly to be lamented, that men of liberal education should, at any time, experience a dearth of employment, but they should ever remember the mercantile axiom, that the supply should cease with the demand, instead of resorting to such ungentlemanly revenge as the propogation of falsehoods in a public newspaper.

The inability of medical men who were aspiring to settle in Van Diemen's Land to obtain either Government employment or a private living was only one aspect of the medical problem. In fact, it was generally considered that the whole state of the Medical Profession was imperfect, and yet very few people understood why. In an attempt to enlighten the public and to improve the situation, Dr Richards, in 1834, contributed to the February number of Melville's Hobart Town Magazine, a lengthy article which was commended by the Colonial Times and republished in that newspaper on Tuesday, March 4, 1834. On March 14, 1834, the Courier also agreed.

In Richards' opinion people had little choice in their selection of a doctor: indeed, in nine cases out of ten, they were forced to employ one in whom they had no faith whatsoever. Medical men in fact, were divided into two distinct classes, those who were employed by the Government and those who were not. The Government surgeons were principally young men

² Lancet, 1837-8, Vol. 1, p. 716.

or men who had been appointed when mere lads and had grown older in the service; they were under the supervision of the Principal Colonial Surgeon and could be sent to any district or even to a penal settlement. Usually, each newly appointed surgeon received an appointment to a penal settlement first, before he became eligible for a more comfortable position. In 1834 the only penal settlement was Port Arthur which was under the control of a Surgeon-Superintendent, who was also a magistrate, in conditions similar to that found on a prison ship. As he was responsible for the degree of punishment inflicted upon the prisoners, Richards firmly disagreed with the policy of appointing young, immature men to such a position. No official or formal qualifications were necessary for such Government appointments, but, as the Principal Colonial Surgeon was held completely responsible both for their conduct and their professional activities, it was necessary for him for his own sake to be cautious about whom he appointed to the various districts.

Richards found no real fault with this system except that it allowed too much favouritism. More than one Government surgeon was enjoying a lucrative position without ever being compelled to serve his term at a penal settlement. Although there were too few District Surgeons, Governor Arthur intended to remedy this situation as soon as he could obtain the money and the consent of the British Government. Until then, the situation was distressing; it could even be fatal:- each settler was obliged to pay 10/- a year medical fee for each assigned servant; frequently he had to send fifteen to twenty miles to obtain the assistance of a doctor; in urgent cases this meant death to the victim of an accident. Richards described one case which occurred on the property of a well-known and respected settler near Oatlands where a log of wood had fallen upon an assigned servant; nearly seven hours lapsed before medical attention arrived. Such cases were not at all infrequent in country districts where heavy and dangerous work like land clearing was in progress. There were actually some large, fairly well populated districts like Perth and Green Ponds where there were no District Surgeons at all. Therefore, it was the Government's duty to supply medical men who were properly qualified:

We say emphatically 'properly qualified medical men' because we would have this Department of the Government beyond all reproach and above all cavil, for the situations in which the distant and isolated practitioner may be and often is placed, are frequently of the most urgent responsibility. Life and death may depend upon the promptitude and boldness of his decision and the limbs of His Majesty's lieges are continually at his mercy. From the nature of the men's employment in this colony, there is, perhaps no country

in the world where so many accidents are constantly occurring, and, although these accidents may not, if improperly treated, terminate fatally, yet what compensation can the ignorant surgeon render a poor patient, prisoner though he be - for the crippling of his body for life.

He appealed urgently to the Legislative Council to take the matter in hand and establish some kind of tribunal by which medical qualifications could be judged.

The situation respecting Government surgeons was bad enough but that pertaining to private practitioners was appalling:

When we look at the extraordinary set of beings, who come out here either as "experienced surgeons" in charge of merchant ships or as private passengers, we shall see at once the necessity of such a regulation. As the law now stands, any druggist's errand boy may bring out his paraphernalia of gallipots and pillboxes, and, fixing half a dozen coloured bottles in his window, write himself down a "surgeon" and kill or cure - as luck will have it - as many patients as may be foolish enough to trust him.

The Public could hardly be expected to discern the true from the false. Not all those professing to be doctors were incompetent, some were of great benefit to the community. Hence it was necessary to set up a Board of Examiners immediately to determine the qualifications of all, and, in so doing, to set the minds of the Public at rest.

Also Richards drew attention to the opposition existing between members of the Medical Profession, particularly between the Government surgeon and the private practitioner. This he deplored as not only unworthy of the Profession but as positively harmful to the Public. In England the Medical Profession was held in the highest esteem; in Hobart Town it merited little respect for its concern with "petty jealousies":

Because there is too much cavilling about qualification - too much stickling at fusty formality, which would be all very well 'at home' where the physician is to his kind, and the surgeon to his order, and the apothecary to no order at all - but here it is out of piece, in every instance, where a man has proved himself of adequate abilities.

Therefore, a Board of Examiners was imperative to ensure a body of properly qualified men to care for the people's health and to put an end to the animosity and schism at present existing in the Profession itself. Lastly, Richards urged that native students should be admitted to the Profession after a proper and adequate course of training.

The article elicited an immediate response from Scott and Assistant Surgeons E.S.P. Bedford and W. Seacombe. On April 15, 1834, they wrote a joint letter to the Colonial-Secretary requesting that the

Government establish a Board for the Condemnation of Medicines, and for the exclusion of improper persons from practising as medical men. They requested also that no member of the Board should be himself a vendor of medicines and that no practitioners of Physic or Surgery should be allowed to sell medicines. In reply, on May 17, 1834, the Colonial-Secretary intimated that the Governor would not object to the introduction of a suitable bill in the Legislative Council; also on May 16 the Attorney-General was requested to prepare an act, with the proviso that it should not take precedence over any other matters for which draft legislation had been already requested.³ However, it was not until 1837 that legislation was finally enacted.

In 1833 the Government Medical Department comprised Colonial Surgeon J. Scott, R.N. and Assistant Surgeons J. Bryant, E.S.P. Bedford and A. Turnbull, all stationed in Hobart; Assistant Surgeons were posted at Launceston and Georgetown and at Macquarie Harbour and Port Arthur penal settlements; District Assistant Surgeons were at New Norfolk, Oatlands, Campbell Town, Bothwell, Norfolk Plains, Great Swan Port and Maria Island. In addition to the Government doctors, six private practitioners were listed in Hobart Town by the Van Diemen's Land Annual in 1834. It is interesting to note that most of these were later employed by the Government.

About the middle of 1834, the exact date is not known, Hall and his family left Hobart to live in Brighton. They now had a daughter, born on Sunday, May 18, 1834, and christened "Mary Jane" by Father Ullathorne, later to become Bishop of Birmingham. During their stay of less than a year in Hobart Town, Hall had become a staunch supporter of the Roman Catholic Church.

³ CSO 1/712/15577.

CHAPTER 4

BRIGHTON

Brighton, a district situated on the main route from Hobart Town to Launceston at some sixteen miles distance from Hobart Town, was the first of many country districts in which Hall practised his profession during the next twenty years, and the only one in which he engaged in private practice. However, the precise circumstances which determined his choice of Brighton and his removal thereto, are unknown.

The population was rural, scattered and not very large, composed of 657 free males, 374 free females, 967 male convicts and 57 female convicts, a total of 2,055.¹ Actually, the district was without medical attention until December 14, 1833, when Scott applied to have District Assistant Surgeon W. De Little sent there in answer to several requests made by Assistant Police Magistrate F. Roper to have a medical man appointed to care for the great number of men employed on the roads.² With De Little caring for the convicts and performing all the official duties, it was probably difficult for Hall to make a living, especially as he was at a considerable disadvantage as a Roman Catholic.

Restricted though he was professionally, Hall soon became well known as the leader of the Catholics for whom he conducted services in his own home in the absence of the visiting priest, a practice which he followed in later years in other country areas. He also became known to the Government through his persistent and eventually successful effort from November 5, 1834, to August 31, 1835, to secure the payment of a small fee of three guineas for attendance at a murder inquest to which he was summoned by the local police.³ However, it was his prominent participation in the Brighton Association for the Detection and Supression of Felonies, formed

¹ Hobart Town Almanack and Van Diemen's Land Annual, 1835, p. 47.

² CSO 1/689/15154.

³ CSO 1/768/16408 & 1/820/17492.

on August 9, 1837, to counteract the inefficiency and negligence of the Brighton Police, which revealed him as a man of unusual qualities, earned for him the enmity of Roper and his friends, and attracted the attention of the press and the colonists.⁴

Although the Brighton Association came to an ignominious end through lack of agreement by its members, it had also served its purpose and was no longer necessary. For some time past, the district had been seriously alarmed and outraged by the daring atrocities of the bushranger Regan and his associates, who had managed to elude all efforts of the police to capture them. Finally, Captain A. McKenzie of the 21st Royal Scots Fusiliers set out from Green Ponds on May 16, 1838, with a corporal and three privates, two constables and two volunteers to attempt the capture, and succeeded in doing so two days later.⁵ Thereupon, the Brighton residents who were anxious to present a testimonial of their gratitude to McKenzie, formed the Committee for the Presentation of the Silver Salver with Hall as Secretary and one hundred and thirteen subscribers. Consequently at the end of September, 1838, Hall journeyed to Hobart Town to make the presentation to the Captain.⁶ Actually, he was anxious to use the occasion of his visit to wait upon the Governor for the second time. By now he realized that private medical practice in Brighton could not succeed; his family was increasing steadily; there were assigned servants in the household; many people were dependent upon him for support. He decided to seek employment with the Government Medical Service as a District Assistant Surgeon, as many other doctors were forced to do.

The possibility of an appointment first arose on July 30, 1838, when a letter, signed by Assistant Police Magistrate Major C. Schaw, the Reverend J. Garrett and nine leading citizens of Bothwell, was sent to Principal Medical Officer Dr J. Arthur, with the news that De Little, who had been transferred from Brighton to Bothwell a short while before, had been thrown from his horse into the River Clyde while returning late at night from visiting a patient, and his body had not been recovered. They asked that his successor be a man with ability and medical knowledge,

⁴ CSO 5/126/2963.

True Colonist, May 17, 18, 1837.

May 18, June 30, 1838.

Courier, June 15, August 17, 1838.

⁵ Courier, May 25, 1838.

⁶ Courier, October 5, 8, 1838.

capable of affording efficient assistance on all occasions, preferably J. Grant of the Launceston Hospital. On August 2 Schaw described the feelings of most of the nine hundred people of Bothwell:

I have to express the general opinion of the District in their wishes that your appointment of his successor may be a steady married man as there are several large families that will only employ such a gentleman and without the it would not be an object worthy the attention of any Practitioner.

Dr Durie, now District Assistant Surgeon at Brighton, and the first to acquaint Arthur of De Little's accident, was one of the seventeen doctors who applied for the appointment at Bothwell, giving as his reason facts which throw some light on the situation in Brighton at the time:

I have served also as District Medical Officer at Avoca where there was scarcely any practice and latterly at Brighton, equally as undesirable for a medical practitioner, on account of the reluctance of the inhabitants to pay a medical man, Brighton not being preferable to Avoca.⁷

On August 1, Hall, too, waited upon the Governor to ask personally for the appointment. However, although his application was considered very favourably, Arthur wrote to Governor J. Franklin on August 15, 1838:

.... though with every desire to forward and favour the application for an appointment by Mr Hall of Brighton, I yet conceive it but just that his should give way to those of others on this occasion - but will be happy on the next opportunity offering to recommend it for favourable consideration

Thus, in spite of the fact that Arthur did not wish to encourage the spirit of partisanship expressed by some of the residents of Bothwell in their attitude to a doctor, an element in the community which was later to cause Hall much distress, the appointment was given on August 24 to Grant, a single man, as he had been longer in the service. Now, just before leaving Brighton for Hobart Town to make the "Silver Salver" presentation, Hall heard of changes in the Medical Department concerned with Dr Officer which offered the possibility of an appointment at New Norfolk and wrote to the Colonial Secretary on September 27 requesting a second interview with the Governor. The Medical Department, however, informed him on October 13 that arrangements had been made which did not create a vacancy.

A further disappointment awaited him. According to the address at the head of Hall's letters, the family lived in a rented house at Bagdad, an area a little to the north of Brighton, for the first two years after their move to the district. However, in 1836 Hall purchased from

⁷ CSO 5/135/3238.

J.C. Seymour, who had recently bought it from the original grantee, Dr Brownell, a ten acre allotment located in the area previously marked out by Sir George Arthur's Government to be the township of Brighton. At the time of the purchase it was only temporarily fenced and had a 'rude' stone cottage on it. The purchase price of two hundred and fifty pounds was considered a fair price for an allotment in a proposed township, on which understanding Hall bought it, the title deed being gazetted on December 14, 1838. He made further improvements, enlarging "Seymour Cottage" and erecting fencing, the whole costing one hundred pounds. By the end of 1838, however, it was clear that the proposed township of Brighton was not going to eventuate. In fact, the township was moved across the valley to Pontville in spite of the disappointment and losses of those who had invested their money and their faith in Brighton. The first indication of the Government's lack of faith was the arrival of a surveyor with orders to survey all the unoccupied lands of the Brighton township, preparatory to their being offered for sale in large lots. On November 1, 1838, Hall protested indignantly to the Colonial Secretary. With three hundred and fifty pounds he could have purchased a farm of two to three hundred acres. He had willingly paid this amount on the understanding that Brighton would be a township. A few weeks before, a ten acre allotment comparable to his own had been offered at public auction and, because of the rumoured change, had brought only one hundred and seventy pounds. This amounted to a decrease in value of fifty per cent; a greater depreciation still was expected. Hall called upon the Government to compensate those affected by the change in plans by allowing them to purchase a certain number of acres most convenient to their allotments at a minimum price in proportion to the amount they had expended on the faith of its being a township. He suggested land be sold in lots of fifty to two hundred acres to enable present proprietors to acquire enough to turn their present holdings into small farms. On December 14 Hall received a reply from A. Turnbull that the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council did not consider he [Hall] had any claim for compensation and that he was misinformed about sizes of lots to be sold the largest being two hundred and ninety acres. Almost four years later, bitterness and anger at the Government's loss of faith still persisted in the community. The unlocated land round Brighton was sold to various landed proprietors who rented it out in small farms; repeated complaints of losses sustained were met with refusal. Hall, indeed, suffered considerable financial loss, which he could ill afford.⁹

Fortunately, he did not have to wait very long for an official appointment. As long ago as February 11, 1838, an application was made to have a Medical Officer appointed to Spring Bay where there was a Police Station, but no medical assistance within thirty miles. However, the request did not receive the consent of the Governor until December 17, 1838, and was referred to the Colonial Surgeon on December 22 for his opinion; eventually Hall's name was approved on March 13, 1839. He immediately visited Spring Bay to find accommodation and arrange the transfer of his family, but found it impossible to obtain a house or even temporary lodging of any kind within the vicinity. After a month's effort, still nothing had been found. At this point, Grant, who wished to go to Launceston where he was to be married and where later he was to become Pugh's partner, tendered his resignation to the Principal Medical Officer, who, on April 18, 1839, recommended that Hall be appointed to Bothwell where a Government house was already provided, and that another Medical Officer be appointed to Spring Bay. On April 24 a Mr Crook, a newly arrived single man from London, was appointed to Spring Bay and Hall was directed to commence duty at Bothwell on May 1, 1839, as District Assistant Surgeon at the rate of £100. 7. 6 per year, plus 2/6 forage allowance per week.¹⁰ Hall thereby became one of thirteen Medical Officers employed by the Convict Department; his fellow surgeons were Temporary Colonial Surgeon R. Officer; Assistant Surgeons E.S.P. Bedford, W. Dermer, C.G. Casey, and I. McDowell, all stationed in Hobart Town; and District Assistant Surgeons I.F. Sharland, F.G. Park, C.F. Storey, T. Creighton, H. Thomas, M. Walsh and K. McLeay. Their salaries ranged from Colonial Surgeon £531. 17. 6 to £278. 2. 6; £182. 10. 0; £162. 17. 6; £136. 17. 6 and £100. 7. 6 according to their qualifications, experience and good fortune. Hall, new and untried, was placed on the lowest scale.¹¹

On July 12, 1839, the True Colonist advertised:

To Let
at Brighton

a ten-acre allotment with neat, stone cottage and convenient outbuildings thereon. The whole is in cultivation and has recently been fenced with six foot paling in the most substantial manner. The garden of $\frac{3}{4}$ of an acre has been made on the most scientific principle, having been trenched three foot deep etc. and is well stocked with choice fruit trees, shrubs, flowers etc. To a respectable tenant the rent will be moderate but security will be required.

Apply to Mr Stace, Postmaster, or E.S. Hall Esq., Dis. Assis. Surgeon, Bothwell.

June 25th, 1839.

¹⁰ CSO 5/165/3919

¹¹ CSO 50/13 p. 161.

The property was advertised again on June 28, July 19 and July 26. The family never returned to Seymour Cottage which was probably sold. For the rest of his life Hall lived in rented houses.

Hall's time in Brighton, from mid 1834 to the end of April, 1839, saw many changes and the glimmerings of greater ones which would vitally affect the lives of all concerned. On October 20, 1836, Sir George Arthur's long term of twelve years as Governor ended; he described it as a period of "progress and excitement". Speaking of the agricultural and grazing section of the community he wrote:

It is rather the general movement and the steady progress of the settlers as a body that attracts attention. Both the one and the other are, however, I should conceive, quite unprecedented. There is no parallel of such rapid progress in any former instance of civilization. Never in so short a space of time did the first possessors of any territory pass from a state of comparative poverty, into one not only of abundance but of absolute wealth.¹²

By this time, apart from the western part of the island, almost all the available pasture land had been appropriated. New immigrants with capital found they had to become either tenants or purchase the estate of another, or put their money into other business ventures. Arthur's successor, Sir John Franklin, who spent a month on an acclimatisation tour of the colony soon after his arrival on January 6, 1837, was enthusiastic in his praises:

I have been agreeably surprised by the advanced conditions of the colony in nearly all respects, by the ease and opulence in which the settlers live, and by the degree of intelligence which I have found among them. Good roads and bridges with a few other improvements ... seem alone wanting to give full development to the resources of the country and advance it to a high state of prosperity ...¹³

Franklin also noted that there was a strong desire for increased moral and religious education in the colony and that an "inconvenient degree of excitability of public feeling"¹⁴ existed. On this first tour, Franklin did not pay much attention to the conditions of the convicts at road stations, surprised and delighted as he was by the enthusiastic welcome he received everywhere and the novelty of the situation.¹⁵ Certainly the conditions at some of the road stations were very bad, the Brighton area being no exception. On March 19, 1838, De Little complained that the

¹² GO 33/20 p. 240.

¹³ GO 33/26 p. 196.

¹⁴ GO Ibid., p. 198.

¹⁵ Colonial Times, Feb. 7, 1837.

sleeping huts at Bagdad Bridge Station were so exposed to the weather, so open to the wind and the rain, that he was afraid of sickness during the winter months. He stressed the need for a separate hut at Bagdad and other road stations to be used as a hospital, and a man chosen from the convicts to clean it and attend the sick; while sick men were mixed with the rest of the convicts, it was impossible to give them proper attention; as the sick were unable to look after themselves, the doctor's treatment frequently was not carried out. De Little also complained about the inconvenient state of the watch-house at Brighton: the present cells were capable of holding no more than four persons properly, but, because of the scarcity of cells, sometimes twenty to thirty persons, sometimes thirty-six, were confined in one cell. So strong was the effluvia issuing from the cells that the doctor was unable to enter. He considered these conditions highly dangerous, especially in the case of an infectious disease.¹⁶

On August 15, 1839, Franklin described his impressions gained during a second tour on which he visited Green Ponds, Oatlands, Campbell Town, the Isis, Norfolk Plains, Westbury, Launceston, Evandale, George Town, Launceston via Snake Banks, the South Esk, Avoca, Malahide, Campbell Town, Oatlands, Jerusalem and Richmond, and, in so doing, covered the principal parts of the settled areas of the colony. He found the roads in many places greatly improved and commented again on the life style of the free settlers:

The appearances presented by the Establishments of the settlers are most satisfactory. There are almost everywhere indications of order and regularity and real comfort, as marked as could be expected, or perhaps even reasonably desired in so new a country.¹⁷

This time, he took greater interest in the state of the convicts, visiting both the huts of assigned servants on settlers' farms and the road stations on his route. Either he did not investigate too closely, or he was over-optimistic in his assessment of the situation. In any case he reported that the road stations were generally in good order:

Much attention is devoted to cleanliness and a proper degree of comfort. Almost every man has his own berth which is separated on each side from those adjoining.¹⁸

Moreover, the years 1834-9 were not without incident in medical affairs. In 1835, Scott, who, as Colonial-Surgeon, had been head of the Government Medical Department since December 1820, was superseded by

¹⁶ CSO 5/114/2618.

¹⁷ GO 33/32 p. 333.

¹⁸ Ibid., p. 335.

12 " Dr John Arthur, appointed by Governor G. Arthur as Deputy Inspector-General of Hospitals and Principal Medical Officer, with instructions to reorganize the convict hospitals and bring the administration into line with the Imperial Military Hospitals. Scott, however, did not long survive his reduction in status. After a long and severe illness, he died at his home "Boa Vista" on July 21, 1837, and was buried amidst a large and representative gathering of two hundred and fifty people.

Arthur's appointment, however, was an unfortunate one. Although his recommendations were sensible and he made reasonable attempts to produce order, he lacked the personal qualities necessary for success. His impulsive nature and lack of tact brought him into constant conflict with Bedford, who was in charge of the Hobart Town Hospital, also with Franklin and the Colonial-Secretary. Finally, on September 21, 1838, he and J. Dunn, the Deputy-Purveyor, were suspended by the Executive Council. Arthur's place was filled temporarily by Officer, formerly District Assistant Surgeon at New Norfolk from 1824. In 1838 Officer was appointed by the Executive Council to inspect the entire Colonial and Convict Medical Department which he reported to be in a complete state of disorganization. Appointed as Temporary Colonial Surgeon on January 18, 1839, he was responsible for Hall's appointment to Bothwell. In 1840, with the appointment of Dr John Clarke as Principal Medical Officer, peace was restored once again.

Of far greater importance was the announcement by the Courier on October 29, 1837, that, at last, after a lapse of more than three years since permission had been granted to compile an act, the Legislative Council had determined the legal qualifications of practitioners. On November 25, and November 27, 1837, two acts to regulate the Practice of Medicine were passed by the Legislative Council. The first act (VR 14) provided for the attendance of medical witnesses at inquests; according to the circumstances of death, the Coroner was enabled to summon one or more legally qualified doctors to give evidence and to perform a post-mortem if necessary. The fee for attendance was set at one guinea and two guineas for a post-mortem; if the inquest were held at a place further than ten miles from the residence of the doctor, 1/- per mile extra was to be paid and the coroner was directed to issue a certificate covering the amount payable by the Colonial-Secretary for the witness's service.

The second act (VR 17) established who should be declared "legally qualified". For this purpose the act set up a Court of Examiners of seven members appointed by the Lieutenant-Governor. A person

would be deemed "legally qualified" after proving to the satisfaction of the President or any one member of the Court of Examiners that he was a Doctor of Medicine of some University or a Physician Surgeon or Apothecary licensed or admitted as such by some College of Physicians or Surgeons or by the Society of Apothecaries of London or Dublin.

Secondly, a person would be deemed "legally qualified" after obtaining Letters Testimonial to practise following a successful examination held before at least three members of the Court of Examiners. The power of the Court of Examiners was to cease after 1840, except in the case of candidates conforming to the course of education.

This act was amended on October 5, 1840, when it was decreed that Letters Testimonial would be granted after an exam before three members, and that the sale of drugs was to be licensed. A further Act of August 31, 1842, consolidated the previous acts. By this important act the position of doctors in the colony was established for some years to come; the Lieutenant-Governor was empowered to appoint a Court of Medical Examiners; it defined who were legally qualified practitioners and set the penalty for those practising without the correct qualifications. It set out a course of education necessary to obtain Letters Testimonial with certain regulations pertaining to the pupils. The Court was empowered to settle the scale of fees and to make rules governing its own proceedings and decisions, any act of three or more members to be deemed the act of the whole Court. The act gave control of the sale of drugs and established the rights of appeal.¹⁹

A question of minor importance perhaps to some of the more successful private practitioners, but of some consequence to those doctors employed in the Government Medical Department, was the decision made at this time by the Governor in respect of free medicine. For some time past there had been considerable difference of opinion amongst persons employed in the Colonial Service and those in the Convict Department as to who were eligible for free medical attention and free medicines. On May 1, 1838, Arthur appealed to Franklin to set up a Board to decide this touchy question. The Board, composed of Arthur himself, G.T.W. Boyes Auditor of Accounts,

Acts of the Legislative Council, Vol. 2, 1837-43, p. 1313.

W.E.L.H. Crowther, "A Background to Medical Practice and the Training of Surgical Apprentices and Pupils in Van Diemen's Land", The Australian and New Zealand Journal of Surgery, Vol. XXI, 1951-2, p. 195.

and H.C. Darling Commissary of Accounts, and established on May 7, 1838, found that:

.... all persons employed in that (the Convict Service) with their wives and families are entitled to medical aid gratis from the Medical Officers on the convict establishment and to medicines from them out of those supplied for the convict branch of the Medical Department. Some indulgence should be applied to those employed in the Colonial Service with their wives and families but not at the expense of the Convict Funds.²⁰

Such a decision, of course, was relevant to Hall, both when struggling to earn a living as a private practitioner in Brighton, and later in Bothwell when striving to cope with his numerous duties as a District Assistant Surgeon on a small salary. It is impossible not to wonder whom the Board thought should be responsible for the indulgence to the Colonial Service, if it were not to be the Convict Department Funds; presumably the doctors themselves.

²⁰ CSO 5/121/2782.

CHAPTER 5

THE PROBATION SYSTEM

Hall started work as District Assistant Surgeon at Bothwell on May 1, 1839. The change from private medical practice to employment in the Medical Department, forced by the economic exigencies of the time, brought with it many new experiences, different medical conditions to test his skill, and, above all, the necessity for a wider and deeper insight into and understanding of the social and health problems which lay at the heart of community life. He was now not only the doctor to be consulted by the free settlers, the so-called respectable and often well to do element of society, but also "the convict doctor" responsible for the health and welfare of many unfortunate human beings who were frequently in no position either to know what was good for themselves, or to do anything about it if they did. For Hall greater responsibilities, of necessity, were to induce greater depth and breadth of vision.

After almost six years in Van Diemen's Land, he was very aware of the convict population of the island. An assigned servant living in his house obtained a Ticket-of-Leave while the family was in Brighton and was replaced by a male servant recently arrived on the ship "Augusta Jessie".¹ Consequently, he had first hand experience of the difficulties confronting the master and the newly arrived assigned convict who was endeavouring to come to terms with a totally new way of life in a strange environment. But of the problems associated with the mass of convicts he probably knew very little. Oddly enough, his entry into the Government Medical Service coincided with sweeping changes taking place in the British Government's policy concerning convicts transported to Van Diemen's Land. These changes were, indeed, to have a very significant and far-reaching effect upon his future life, both private and professional and for this reason merit discussion.

By the late thirties of the nineteenth century, assignment had been in operation for about fifty years during which it had operated reasonably well in a difficult situation. However, from 1830-35, those

people in Britain who were concerned with social problems, and with the penal system in particular, felt that the old system was outdated and unable to stand up to the claims of the new philosophies now being more widely held by social theorists; it was most desirable that methods of criminal punishment be examined, revised and brought into line with modern precepts. In 1836 the House of Commons, acting in accordance with this widely-held belief and determined to remodel the penal system, set up the Sir William Molesworth Committee on the Transportation of Criminals. During its sittings 1837-8, it heard the evidence of many, varied people, including ex-Governor of Van Diemen's Land, Sir George Arthur, Bishop Ullathorne (Hall's friend) and former colonial Police Magistrates like Peter Murdoch, previously temporarily at Richmond and later at Oatlands. Some of those giving evidence, like the former Superintendent at the Convicts' Barracks in Sydney, Slade, painted lurid pictures of the immorality, corruption, crime and bribery to be found not only on the part of the convicts, but on that, too, of the officials paid by the Government to care for them, from the lowest to the highest functionary. On September 7, 1836, a despatch was forwarded to the Governor of Van Diemen's Land, enclosing a set of sixty-seven questions on assignment to which the Molesworth Committee required answers.

Whilst the Home Government was wondering what it should do about its convicts, Franklin arrived in Hobart Town. In his party was Captain A. Maconochie, a former naval officer from Edinburgh, who had vacated his position as the first professor of geography at London University to which he had been appointed in 1833, to accompany Franklin, his friend of twenty years' standing, to Hobart Town. After hesitating for some months, he had at length agreed to make the journey as Franklin's Private Secretary, on the understanding that he be offered a more important position in the administration of the colony later. Maconochie, one of the founders of the Royal Geographical Society and its first Secretary, was a man of wide and varied interests, one of them being the new philosophy concerned with penal reform. Before leaving London, he was requested by the Society for the Improvement of Prison Discipline to report on the convict system in Van Diemen's Land. On referring the request to the Colonial Secretary, he was told that the British Government was most anxious to obtain

² "Alexander Maconochie", Australian Dictionary of
p. 184.

P. Serle, Dictionary of Australian Biography, Vol. 2, p. 101.

information on this question, and that he should direct any correspondence on the matter through the Lieutenant-Governor to the Secretary of State for the Colonies. Franklin was fully aware that these arrangements had been made.

In due course the Molesworth Committee's despatch reached Hobart Town in June 1837. Franklin submitted it to a Board comprising the Chief Police Magistrate M. Forster, the Director-General of Roads A. Cheyne, and the Principal Superintendent of Convicts. Opinion was fairly evenly divided between those like Maconochie and Cheyne who advocated the abolition of assignment, and those like Montagu and Forster who favoured its retention; Franklin, who was placed in a difficult situation, was inclined to consider a compromise. However, at a meeting of the Executive-Council on August 28, 1837, Maconochie's proposals for a new system were condemned. On October 7, 1837, Franklin sent his reply to London, enclosing his own report on convict discipline, the answers to the Molesworth Committee's questions, and the observations of members of the Board. At Maconochie's request, he also enclosed his Report on the State of Prison Discipline in Van Diemen's Land, 30th September, 1837.³ Although Franklin did not read it, he was aware that it condemned assignment. It was this report, much to the author's surprise, which ignited a spark both in Britain and in Van Diemen's Land, and set the wheels of change in motion.

In his report Maconochie indicated that the degree of punishment was uncertain; sometimes fearful in the case of a bad master, sometimes far too lenient in the case of a good or weak one; in the majority the degree of moral suffering was far in excess of the offence committed, the greater suffering being endured by those who least deserved it. The impact on social life was disastrous, the degradation of one class affecting all others:

The disuse of moral influence in domestic life gives a harsh, peremptory, and overbearing character to the whole intercourse of society. Every difference of opinion makes a quarrel, and every decision, whether of the government or courts of judicature, constitutes a ground of vehement complaint or political invective. The severe regulations of the prison discipline also foster these feelings. They are so strict that they are not and cannot be universally put in force, yet every now and then even the most minute of these is acted on to the loss and inconvenience of individual families by interfering with their domestic servants and this is constantly thought to be caused by personal feeling rather than by right or principle. The disunion of society in the penal colonies is thus complete, and manifests itself in a depth of suspicion and recklessness of assertion beyond all

³ GO 25/7 p. 182 & GO 33/60 p. 287.

precedent in civilized life, but which can, I think, be equally traced to the pervading and demoralizing influence of the existing penal institutions; for the habit of suspicion and violent invective in private life speedily extends to every other relation⁴

In short, Maconochie attributed all the evils of colonial society to the assignment system. He proposed its abolition and replacement by a system under which all newly arrived convicts were to be placed in special camps located in districts isolated from the general public, where, under the superintendence of Government employed staff, they were to undergo their prison sentence which was to be divided into two parts - a period of punishment and a period of reform, in accordance with each prisoner's own behaviour and desire for improvement.

Actually, Franklin could not see any justification for recommending the abolition of assignment. Instead, he suggested certain modifications which he considered would be beneficial: all convicts, before being assigned, were to be coerced in gangs, kept separate from the present punishment gangs of criminals twice convicted, and placed under the supervision of local Government staff; this measure would act as a deterrent to all convicts, who, at the beginning of their servitude, would be impartially dealt with and made to suffer the same punishments. Moreover, the advantages of the domestic servants over the farm labourers would be eliminated and convicts would have nothing to boast home about their good conditions in the colony; free immigrants, too, would have a better chance of finding employment.⁵ These proposals were favourably received in London by the Colonial Secretary, who forwarded instructions to Franklin on July 6, 1838, to put them into effect immediately irrespective of what changes should be considered desirable concerning transportation later. Assignment of convicts "for the purpose of luxury" or as domestic servants was to be discontinued; assigned convicts were to wear some distinguishing badge, and modifications were to be made to the present system of Tickets-of-Leave.⁶

However, before this despatch reached Hobart Town, the English newspapers, arriving in September 1838, brought news which momentarily shocked and angered the colonists, including the Governor himself. They learned to their surprise and horror that Maconochie's report on convict

⁴ Summary of papers on Convict Discipline by A. Maconochie, The Sydney Gazette, quoted by Tasmanian and Review, Nov. 9, 1838.

⁵ GO 25/7 p. 185.

⁶ GO 1/41 p. 101.

discipline, with which so many of them violently disagreed, had been favourably received by the Colonial Secretary's Office, forwarded to Lord Russell at the Home Office, from whence it had been introduced into the House of Commons as a Parliamentary Paper and used by the Molesworth Committee on Transportation, which had finally given its verdict:

.... transportation is both an unequal and uncertain punishment, produces but little apprehension amongst the criminal population of this country, does not tend to reform the convict, is not susceptible of any improvement which would render it an efficacious punishment and that its influence on the moral state of society in the penal colonies is of the worst description⁷

The Committee recommended it should cease to New South Wales and the settled districts of Van Diemen's Land.

Maconochie was surprised at the reception his report received; Franklin was indignant and mortified that his own suggestions were given no publicity and neglected in favour of his Private Secretary's opinions; whilst the colonists were angered by the insult to their character. In the ensuing storm of feeling, Franklin felt obliged to dismiss his Private Secretary on September 21. Moreover, residents of Campbell Town, Oatlands and Bothwell, resentful of the slur cast upon their image, requested his opinion on the moral character of the free population. Tactful as always, he responded soothingly:

.... The unfavourable features in the moral character of the free population are due less to the connection with a convict population under the existing system, than to the recency of the colony's existence, a position which was in its origin extremely unfavourable to the development of public spirit by causing the private interests of individuals struggling against hardship and difficulties to appear almost exclusively urgent and imperative in their own estimation⁸

The storm slowly subsided. With the publication in the press of letters from Maconochie explaining his ideas, and later the publication of his book "Australiana" or Thoughts on Convict Management and other subjects connected with the Australian Penal Colonies, a capably-written work, the Public gradually began to take an interest in the social philosophies he expounded and, in some cases, to accept them. On October 12, 1838, the Tasmanian wrote:

.... The object of our native country is to reform its transported criminals - to bring good out of evil - to regain man from the degradation into which circumstances and untutored dispositions have plunged him, without a greater severity than

⁷ Quoted Tasmanian and Review, Oct. 26, 1838.

⁸ Ibid, Oct. 12, 1838.

is necessary to this purpose, and with as little as possible detriment to the energies of his immortal nature. Its purpose is to turn the criminal into a good member of society not an obedient submissive slave

With the arrival of the Colonial Secretary's despatch of July 6, 1838, bearing its instructions to place all newly arrived convicts in gangs, the Probation System of Convict Discipline came into being, although very few people in Van Diemen's Land understood its principles, felt it to be necessary, or wanted it introduced.

As far back as November 18, 1837, Franklin had warned the colonists in the Gazette of the Home Government's intention to discontinue at the earliest possible period assignment to private service, and advised them to look to immigration for the requisite supply of labour. Now, on January 18, 1839, there appeared the following notice in the Hobart Town Gazette:

Government Notice No. 16
Colonial Secretary's Office,
Hobart Town,
17th January, 1839.

The Secretary of State has directed that the following modifications shall be introduced into the system of convict discipline, in force at present in the colony.

1. All convicts without exception, are, on their arrival from Great Britain, to be worked in parties totally separated from those gangs which are composed of convicts under colonial sentence to hard labour.
2. The assignment of convicts to be employed for purposes of luxury or as domestic servants to be discontinued.
3. All convicts are to wear a distinguishing badge.
4. There are to be two classes of ticket-of-leave holders.

In consequence of recent emigration of free labourers to South Australia and Port Philip & etc. considerable inconvenience might be felt by the public.

No. 1 not to be put into force until after 1st July next - after this, all convicts to be worked in parties of 4-8-12 months.

Assignment of convicts to be domestic servants and for purposes of luxury to cease after July 1st.

After 1st July 1840 all assignment of convicts in Hobart and Launceston to cease.

No badge proscribed at present.

2 kinds of tickets of leave.

1. Maximum wage only - enter into any description of service and to choose own masters (subject to approval of Chief Police Magistrate).
2. Can hold property, real or personal - do not have to attend muster, except annual one, can change own residence.

During the next months, while Franklin waited for detailed instructions on the Probation System, the English newspapers which were received in Hobart Town brought glimpses of the Home Government's intentions. These so dismayed Franklin that he felt constrained several times to voice his fears about the proposed policy to Colonial Secretary Stanley. On February 2, 1839, he wrote:

I cannot allow a vessel to depart without expressing to Your Lordship my serious apprehensions that the Committee were not aware of the many if not insuperable difficulties, which will in practice present themselves if effect is to be given in all points to their accommodations I fear there will be found positive objections to some portions of the Committee's recommendations, and I very much doubt whether the contemplated benefits either to the Mother Country, the Colonies, or the convicts themselves will in practice be realized⁹

Two weeks later he wrote again, pointing out that there had been very few instances of "peculiar severity"; on the contrary care had been taken not to excite the insurgent spirit by unexpected degrees of punishment, but rather to mitigate the stringency of the penal code. Franklin felt that the moral aspect of the community gave little cause to modify the present system, and drew Stanley's attention to the remarkable degree of security of both person and property to be found.¹⁰ On a month's tour of the settled districts in March and April, he saw little to cause concern.

.... I visited the huts in which the men are lodged at every Establishment, sometimes alone, sometimes attended by the Master, frequently unexpectedly, at almost all times, and under all circumstances, when the huts were in the course of being put in order for the day, or already in order, or when the men were at their meals. I gave the inmates every opportunity of stating anything in their circumstances which they might wish to bring under my notice and in every way I made it a point to obtain all the information within my reach and I had the pleasure of perceiving that there was no expression in any case of dissatisfaction amongst the men, and that, in so far as I could judge, there was also no ground for any such expression. In the huts attached to the Establishments of several of the more wealthy and influential settlers, there was exhibited, in the state of the bed places, and in the general arrangements, an attention to orders and cleanliness creditable to all parties

⁹ GO 25/7 p. 607.

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 689.

concerned. In short, I observed, if I had required additional evidence upon the subject, a strong demonstration of the groundlessness of those misrepresentations which in England have of late been disseminated respecting the character of the free population of this colony¹¹

In spite of Franklin's misgivings, the Probation System was accepted and had now to be put into operation. At a meeting of the Executive Council on May 20, 1841, Forster was elected Comptroller-General of Convicts at a salary of three hundred pounds per annum. By this time probationary gangs had been formed at Brown's River, Jerusalem, Rocky Hills on the Eastern Coast, and Saltwater River on Tasman's Peninsula. Barracks had been built on Slop Island and at Flinder's Bay on Forestier Peninsula, which Franklin considered better suited to the purposes of discipline than Tasman's Peninsula. He hoped that in time all convicts would be collected there. According to the Standing Orders for the Regulation of the Probation System of Convict Labour, the aim was to teach convicts habitually to regard the labour and coercion they suffered as the result and desert of their own guilt. Discipline was to be rigorous and uncompromising, but tempered with judicious advice and moral and religious instruction. Those in charge were to treat the convicts as fellow men and, though there was to be no relaxation of punishment, attempt to influence their minds to a better form of behaviour and life; the 'mind' was important, and a man's character and conduct were to be the deciding factors in the type of punishment meted out. There were to be no indulgences such as tobacco, and their only possessions were to be rations and clothing issued by the Government.

The general principles of the system must be acted upon to the letter; they must be enforced with firmness and in a spirit of consistency and determination, anything like an approach to partiality, favour or affection being studiously avoided.¹²

The Courier in its editorial on August 27, 1841, commented:

.... In considering our Probation system, no person of candid discernment can fail to remark that, while governed by a tone of sufficient severity to adapt it to the characters and condition of the individuals for whom designed, it is conspicuous for a spirit of ample benevolence, the desire of reclaiming and restoring the criminal to a useful position in the social state, which cannot be estimated too highly. We believe it to be the expressed desire of the Director of the plan to those carrying out his instructions, to avoid uncalled for chastisements on all occasions, and that no extreme or degrading punishments be awarded without careful consideration whether their infliction be more likely to admonish or retard the delinquent's return to the path of amendment. As the mere wages of guilt, therefore, punishment is in disuse. It is made the business of the

¹¹ GO 33/32 p. 335.

¹² GO 33/38 p. 846.

superintending officers to warn, to advise, and to instruct those under their charge, and in this task they are assisted by the provision of a selected collection of books supplied to each station, to be read by or to the prisoners composing the establishment. There is a sober fitness in the whole design, from which, finely contrasted as it is with the moral masquerading of Norfolk Island - sound results may be expected

Final instructions to enable Franklin to put into effect the requirements of the new policy were despatched from London on November 25, 1842. These classified five stages through which a convict must pass before he could obtain a pardon, except in rare cases where the Queen alone might grant one. The first was detention at Norfolk Island for those transported for life, or for "aggravated" cases whose terms of sentence were not less than fifteen years, the period of service there being from four to two years according to each case. The second was the Probation Gang, located in Van Diemen's Land, for those who had completed their term on Norfolk Island and for those sentenced to transportation for a less term than life; these were to be employed, like those on Norfolk Island, in hard labour in the service of the Government. This group was divided into two or three lesser groups, from each of which a man moved according to his own conduct; the period was to extend from one to two years only. At the completion of his time in the Probation Gang, and having obtained a certificate of good conduct, the convict passed to the stage of "Probation Pass" of which there were three classes. At this stage, he was able to earn money in outside work according to certain regulations: those in the first class, with the Governor's prior consent, could engage in private service for which they received half wages: those in the second or third class could do so without previous consent by the Governor provided they reported it for approval. The second class received two-thirds of a wage, the third class a whole wage. Employers paid all wages received into a Savings Bank Account to be handed over when its owner received his Ticket-of-Leave. Passholders could be degraded or sent back to probation gangs, on which event the money was forfeited to the Governor to be held till later, or given to the convict's family in the event of his death. If no work was available, probation pass holders were to return to gangs to work on roads or to become members of jobbing parties hired out by the Government to do agricultural work for private people. Money paid for jobbing parties went to the Commissariat. Probation pass holders could take no legal action in the case of injustice, but could apply to the Comptroller-General to do so on their behalf. Finally, at the fourth stage, a Ticket-of-Leave could be granted, provided at least half of the original

sentence had been served, to be followed by a Pardon. Each stage of discipline was controlled by regulations too numerous to elucidate here, the whole process being dependent upon the convict's own desire for improvement and social reform.¹³

Since Hall, as a "convict doctor", was in frequent contact for many years with men who lived out their penal sentences according to these conditions, the pattern of their daily life is an indication of the likely problems both mental and physical he was called upon to solve. The probation gangs consisted of two hundred and fifty to three hundred or more men who were employed on the building of roads and bridges, clearing land and growing crops for their own subsistence. Although there were slight variations from one camp to another, the following hours of work were usually adhered to: in November, December, January and February work began at five thirty a.m. and finished at six p.m. with time off for breakfast from eight until nine and dinner from twelve to one. In March, October, April and September, work began at six thirty a.m. and ended at five thirty p.m.; in May and August, from eight a.m. until five p.m.; in June and July, from eight a.m. until four thirty, meal times being the same in each case. In the winter months breakfast was eaten before convicts left for work at eight. Each man was issued with two cloth jackets, two pairs of cloth trousers, two shirts, four pairs shoes, two leather caps, one rug, one blanket and one palliasse, an amount which seems hardly enough to withstand the cold of Van Diemen's Land winters, especially in the higher districts of the island's interior where some of the camps were located. Daily food for each convict was also strictly rationed: $1\frac{1}{2}$ lbs flour (of type 12%); $\frac{1}{2}$ lb vegetables; 1 lb fresh meat, or 1 lb salt beef or 16 ounces pork; $\frac{1}{2}$ oz salt; $1\frac{1}{2}$ oz soap. The men slept in huts housing ten, twenty, sometimes even many more according to their class. Each station was under the control of a Government employed staff consisting of one superintendent, three assistant superintendents, one clerk who was also the storekeeper, three working overseers and one messenger. As the Probation System became more firmly established, the general picture of minute to minute daily life in the stations gradually emerged. One hour before the time specified for starting work, the constable on watch rang the first bell, on which the convicts immediately rose, folded their bedding neatly and prepared to leave the ward. Fifteen

¹³ GO 1/48 p. 165.

minutes later, on the ringing of a second bell, the dormitories were unlocked and the convicts gathered on the muster ground from which they went in groups of ten to the backyard to wash under the supervision of an officer. Fifteen minutes later, on the ringing of a third bell, they all mustered again and were carefully inspected; then prayers were read by the schoolmaster and several parties were formed and marched off to work until breakfast time, while others stayed in the camp to clean the dormitories, messrooms and other buildings and prepare breakfast. It was then that the Medical Officer examined and attended those who were sick. At five minutes to eight, a fourth bell assembled all in the yard for breakfast, except those in working parties at some distance from the camp, in which case they ate breakfast at work. On entering the mess room each man hung his cap on the hook provided, and while all stood up grace was said before and after the meal. After breakfast all assembled in the yard again, and, on a fifth bell, working parties were formed and the men marched off to work. At 11.55 a.m. they were recalled for dinner for an hour and then returned to work again until time for the evening meal. Strict regulations were set down for the conduct of the evening. After the evening meal the men immediately went to their sleeping berths or mustered in the yard preparatory to going to school. Those who were not attending school, after going to their berths, carefully placed their boots in front of their berth and arranged their caps on top of their boots in a neat and orderly fashion. Each man sat or lay on his palliasse and was not allowed to walk about the ward or engage in conversation with another. Each ward was provided with a step ladder to enable a man who was able to read well to read aloud to his fellows with the aid of the lamp. Library books selected by the religious instructor were passed from ward to ward. Fifteen minutes before the silence bell rang, those attending school returned to their wards quietly in order not to disturb the reading still in progress. On the silence bell all the prisoners sat up in their berths and sang the first and last verses of the evening hymn or psalm chosen by the religious instructor. From then on for the rest of the night complete silence was enforced in the wards. A watchman was on duty in each ward and a lamp was kept burning all night. One constable and two watchmen guarded the whole camp, visiting each ward several times each hour, the watch being changed at midnight. On Saturday evenings there was no school, the convicts being expected to repair their clothing. On Sundays the convicts were marched to Divine Service in the morning and in the afternoon, and in the evening attended classes in which Scriptures were read by fellow prisoners and

explained by the schoolmaster. Even the smallest details of daily life were allowed for in the regulations: three times a week the convicts' bedding was taken to the yard rails to air, twice in the winter if weather permitted; clean shirts were supplied twice a week in the summer, once a week in the winter; each prisoner was shaved twice a week, and, last but by no means least, each prisoner washed his feet twice a week in the summer and once a week in the winter.¹⁴ Taking all these factors into account the duties of the Medical Officer were not very pleasant.

However, as each station was regularly attended, greater opportunity for employment was given to Medical Officers. In 1840, at the beginning of the Probation System, the Government Medical Service was not able to obtain sufficient doctors, a rather novel situation for those who had previously found it so difficult to make a living. Thus, on June 6, Clarke, now Principal Medical Officer, inserted a notice in the Gazette advertising for them:

As there is a great want of Medical Aid on many occasions which frequently I am called upon to supply.

For some people the Probation System brought greater financial security, at least for a time.

Regulations to guide Medical Officers like Hall, who were in charge of convict hospitals, probation stations, road parties, and the like were drawn up by Dr John Robertson, when he became Deputy Inspector General of Hospitals and Principal Medical Officer, and published in 1845.¹⁵ These left little doubt as to what was expected.

Each Medical Officer, who was under the control and instructions of the Principal Medical Officer at Hobart Town, was in sole charge of all professional arrangements, and was responsible for seeing that the authorized regulations were carried out and that the proper staff, both in numbers and capability, were employed and their duties correctly performed. He was to visit the hospital regularly twice a day:- in the morning at nine o'clock in the summer, and at ten in the winter; and in the evening between eight and nine throughout the year. At these visits, newly admitted patients, with their persons already cleaned, their clothes purified and changed, were to be examined, prescribed for and allotted to their correct place in the hospital according to their complaint, and the previous history of their illness entered in the Register Book at the right place. The utmost punctuality was required in the hours of

¹⁴ GO 39/3, p. 243.
GO 33/66, pp. 478, 592.

¹⁵ Instructions for the Management of the Convict Hospitals, 1845
(Hobart Town Advertiser Office) Accession No. 4734, Con. 74/1/4734.

attendance, and the doctor was not to leave the hospital until all duties had been completed. Professional duties such as bleeding, cupping, dressing, and bandaging of wounds or ulcers were to be carried out only by the Medical Officer himself or the Assistant House Surgeon, if there were one. Should a patient be transferred to another hospital or to an invalid station, an accurate and minute statement of his case, period of illness, and previous treatment was to be sent for the information of the Medical Officer there, any neglect of this duty to be reported by the latter person to the Principal Medical Officer immediately. On arrival at the hospital, a new patient was first to be made perfectly clean with warm water and soap, his hair combed and cut if necessary, and a well aired shirt put on him. He was to be given a night cap and a pair of list slippers, and afterwards taken to the correct ward where he was to be provided with a hospital dress. At certain hospitals such as Hobart Town, Launceston, New Norfolk and Port Arthur, patients were to be classified into two groups, medical and surgical; in each of these groups patients were to be placed side by side if there was no specific ward allotted to their complaint. Each ward was to have its own bedding, dressings and utensils. Only the Senior Medical Officer in a hospital could order the removal of a patient from one ward to another. Each patient was to have a ticket with his name, disease and date of admission to the hospital written on it and hung over his bed-head. Patients suffering from infectious diseases as fevers, fluxes, smallpox and the like were to be kept separate; before any of their bedding could be used again, it had to be steeped frequently in water, thoroughly aired and exposed to the air, and washed with soap and water; bed straw was to be burnt and the bedsteads or places where the patients lay thoroughly scoured with soap and hot water. Men with ophthalmia and those with "itch" were always, if possible, to be placed in a separate ward. Should a station be sickly, or any bad infectious disease appear, or if ophthalmia be prevalent, the Medical Officer was immediately to report the same to the Principal Medical Officer, stating, in the case of a contagious disease, how it was introduced, whether epidemic, whether common in the neighbourhood, or whether originating with the convicts either from severe duty, long exposure to cold and fatigue, insufficient clothing, bad weather or foul noxious air in unventilated and crowded barracks. A full description of medical treatment being undertaken was also to be given. Except in an urgent case, no major operation was to be performed without previous consultation with the Principal Medical Officer. Wards in the hospital were never to be crowded, a space of five feet at least being allowed for each bed; ventilation was to be carefully regulated according to the diseases of the patients; draughts and currents of air were to be

especially guarded against; bedding was to be well aired and shaken; floors to be dry-rubbed every day with a scrubbing brush mounted on a heavy block, the washing of floors when patients were in the room to be avoided except when absolutely necessary; the wards themselves were to be fumigated and the plastered walls white washed, the wooden sections scoured with soap and water. There were also regulations to provide for further cleanliness, for quietness and for light in the wards. In addition, the Medical Officer was called upon to carry out many small duties: giving permission in writing for a patient to go beyond the hospital boundaries, and for visitors to see patients; allotting duties to patients to help in making beds, cleaning and assisting sick friends; seeing that the hospital stores and instruments were kept in good order and bedding frequently aired and kept dry. He was also to supervise the compiling of diet lists; wine, spirits or malt liquor were to be administered only under his supervision. Each hospital was supplied with one or more medicine chests and the Medical Officer was expected to confine his treatments to the medicines there provided. In addition, he was expected to care for the families and servants of officers of the Convict Department. Those doctors, like Hall, who were also in charge of probation parties and prisoners' barracks were to inspect all the men, not only the sick, once weekly for signs of "itch", venereal complaints, ocular diseases, ulcers and any facial or skin ailments. If any disease was common, these inspections were to be made daily. Prisoners' huts or barracks were also to be frequently examined to preserve cleanliness and ventilation, and improvements suggested to the Superintendent of the station. All prisoners before removal from one station to another were to be inspected for signs of disease and their case reported to the Principal Medical Officer. Undoubtedly the duties of a Medical Officer were multifarious, as all have not been listed here. Considering that one probation camp sometimes held up to four hundred men, it was possible that some of these duties were not very efficiently carried out, especially as there were private patients to be treated too, if a doctor were to earn a decent living. In many of the country districts, he was the only medical man available to attend to everything and everybody from the Assistant Police Magistrate's wife to the meanest convict. At times, Medical Officers were put in charge of two probation stations, at one of which he lived, the other he visited twice weekly. Personal lives of the doctors were also restricted as they were unable to sleep away from their stations without first seeking the approval of the Principal Medical

Officer, nor to absent themselves for any part of the day without first telling the Superintendent.

The Regulations concluded with the following injunction:

.... It must be clearly understood by Medical Officers in the service that the performance of their public duty is invariably to be considered as the primary object and while they are not precluded from affording their professional aid to the inhabitants in their neighbourhood who may wish to avail themselves thereof, yet this latitude of private practice is not to be allowed to occasion the slightest interference of any nature, with their professional duties, which they must be in constant readiness to perform.

This was the life on which Hall entered.

CHAPTER 6

THE CONVICT DOCTOR

BOTHWELL

Bothwell, a small township on the east bank of the River Clyde, was the centre of a farming district situated on a plateau thirteen hundred feet above sea level in the central highland area. Forty-five miles from Hobart Town it was reached only by travelling the Hobart Town-Launceston Road beyond Brighton as far as Melton Mowbray from whence a branch road ran in a westerly direction for thirteen miles to the River Clyde. By 1839 the area boasted a scattered population of about nine hundred people, many of them of Scotch origin, engaged in agricultural and pastoral pursuits. In the township was stationed a small detachment of troops, housed on Barrack Hill overlooking the rest of the town, whose duty it was to protect the residents from the depredations of bushrangers. There was a Post Office receiving mail each day from Hobart Town, a brewery supplying rum and beer to four or five well-patronized inns, a tannery and a limestone quarry. Buildings erected by the tradesmen of the district were scattered around; in the centre, the small stone chapel of St. Luke's catered for the religious needs of two sects, the Presbyterians and the Episcopalians. There was a small library building attached to an outside wall of the Police Office; a small school, several shops, the dwellings of the various officials and a few private homes made up the rest. Round this nucleus in every direction for miles spread the scattered farms of the settlers. To the newcomer, it was a small, isolated place, rather sleepy, even dull. Hall found it lively, stimulating, difficult, and finally distressing.

On their arrival, the Halls moved into a brick house in Barrack Street belonging to the Ordnance Department. Here, on May 10, Mary gave birth to her fourth daughter. The family now consisted of Mary Jane, aged five, who had been born in Hobart Town, Alicia Mary and Josephine, both born in Brighton, and the new baby Victoria. Included also in the household were a young teenage girl, a free arrival, who

cared for the children, and a married ticket-of-leave man and a married female assigned servant who acted as domestic servants - a total of nine persons who were all to be supported on a salary of £100. 7. 6 per year and whatever else Hall could earn in private practice. Moreover, the prevailing economic conditions made his task doubly difficult. 1839, like 1834, was a hard year. Owing to the failure of the wheat crop in New South Wales in 1838, and the consequent large exportation of grain to meet the demands of New South Wales, Adelaide and Port Philip, grain prices reached famine height. In Hobart Town hunger and distress were so widespread that Officer called a meeting at the Town Hall on August 24, 1839, to form the Society for the Relief of the Distressed.¹ Franklin, too, offered to supply a liberal donation of vegetables each week from Government House gardens for the soup kitchens.

Perhaps financial difficulties and worries affected the dispositions of some Bothwell residents too. Certainly Hall was not received with welcoming arms by all in the district, especially not by Schaw of the 21st Regiment who as senior Government official should have known better. Exactly why Schaw adopted such a hostile attitude to so important a man in the community as the doctor so early in their relationship is not at all clear, but by November 1839 his feelings had become so obvious that the True Colonist out of sympathy for Hall drew the Public's attention to the injustice of the Major's slander, although being careful to avoid stating the exact details.² Several years later Hall, too, in a letter to Clarke on October 4, 1841, commented upon the treatment he received from the beginning.

.... Persecuted as I have been by the Assistant Police Magistrate ever since my appointment here in May 1839 - I never thought of appealing for protection to His Excellency in private matters, otherwise I should long since have shown that he has evinced his determination to crush me, not by empty threats but by most injurious acts³

Schaw may have been friendly with the former Assistant Police Magistrate at Brighton, Roper, with whose actions Hall had disagreed, or rumours of Hall's attitudes to the welfare of assigned servants had already reached his ears. Probably the explanation of his conduct lies in his own character and in the circumstances in which he lived at the time. As

¹ Courier, October 18, 1839.

² Colonist, Nov. 3, 1839.

³ C.S.O. 22/8/284.

Assistant Police Magistrate at Bothwell for the past five years, he lived in lavish style with his large family in a beautiful home "Schawfield" which he had purchased from the previous magistrate, Captain Wentworth. In his attempt to complete the thirty roomed house, unfinished at the time of purchase, Schaw almost ruined himself financially, and was heavily in debt, even to Emancipists. As a man of little tact, sympathy and understanding of the needs of others, he was most unpopular with many of the Bothwell residents, who were so incensed in October 1838 at his appropriating for his own use seventeen acres of land, the common property of the township, and the impounding at one pound per head such of the townspeople's cattle and bullocks which happened to stray on it through insufficient fences, that thirty four of them directed a petition to Garrett, the Presbyterian Minister, requesting him to take some action. On that gentleman declining to interfere, the petition was sent to the True Colonist and the case finally heard in the Court of Requests which ruled in favour of Schaw. As a result there was much ill-feeling in the community.⁴

However, annoying though Schaw's animosity was, Hall still found plenty to interest him. Especially attractive to his tastes and inclinations was the Bothwell Literary Society with its library of books. He immediately became a member and enthusiastically devoted much of his leisure time and energy to the furtherance of its objects. As early as 1834 some of the more enterprising of the settlers and townspeople, who still cherished a love of science and literature amidst the harsh realities of their pioneering lives, decided to form a society to improve the education of its members and provide profitable leisure time pursuits. Subjects for discussion were to be literary, philosophical or moral; politics and theology were excluded. The first preliminary meeting was held in the home of Chief Constable A.E. Wheatley on June 2, 1834, but the project lapsed until August 7 when a second meeting took place with Garrett as Secretary. The first public meeting was held on September 6, 1834, and from that time on under Garrett's wise and careful guidance and the devoted industry of men like P. Moss, the Police Clerk, the society prospered. The settlers, wrapped to the eyes against the bitter cold of a Bothwell winter, responded magnificently, no matter how distant their homes, travelling many miles by cart or horseback on poor roads or bush tracks. Each year a course of lectures was given with subjects such as "On the peculiar Advantages of Scientific Knowledge" (Moss); "The Atmosphere and

⁴ True Colonist, Oct. 5, 1838.

its Properties" (Garrett); "On the Infinite Variety which characterizes the Modern World" (Garrett); "On the Advantages of History over Fiction in the Communication of Truth" (R. Barr); "Botany" (Dr Sharland); "Astronomy - the Solar System" (Garrett); and others, many of which were illustrated by diagrams, drawings and even inventions by Moss.⁵ The Courier, on November 18, 1836, reporting on the activities of the Society for the past year, quoted Moss in his lecture on "Vision", in which he conveyed the enthusiasm and devotion felt by the members.

.... finally it must afford infinite gratification to every lover of his species, for it is truly a pleasing and an animated reflection, that in a country so remote from civilized Europe, where but a few, very few years since, existed one vast wilderness, the silence of which was broken only by the harsh scream of the forest birds - that on such a region, humanity and the peaceful arts should have superseded desolation and barbarism. Perhaps on the place where the painted savage in his nightly orgies, amidst the blackened and scorched trunks of the gigantic Eucalyptus, made desolation appear doubly desolate - Nay perchance on the very spot where infanticide and cannibalism rendered the face of nature hideous - have we erected an altar to science and from nature led to nature's God. It is with no little gratification then and I trust an excusable pride, that those who have assisted in this good work may look around and with no ordinary emotions, survey the fabric they have erected - a building not made with hands, but one whose foundations are based in intellect and whose pillars are upreared and supported by the profound truths of philosophy.

On March 1, 1837, the Society felt confident enough of success to request Franklin's patronage which was granted ten days later. Over the years, quite a large library of books was gathered together and housed in the small room adjoining the Police Station, a concession allowed by the Government.

When Hall arrived in Bothwell, the lectures for the 1839 season were already in progress. The introductory lecture given by Garrett on April 19 was followed four days later by one on "Animal Physiology" given by the previous doctor, Grant; on May 1 Moss began a series on the "Laws that govern the Material World" which was followed by "The Principles of Education" delivered by T. Wilkinson, formerly the Postmaster and then in charge of the Bothwell Board School; in July and August Garrett presented a further series on astronomy, and Moss a lecture on pneumatics. Others, too, proffered their services. Like his medical predecessors, Sharland and Grant, Hall also became one of the Society's lecturers, choosing as

⁵ Courier, May 10, 1839
August 9, 1839.

the subject of his series "The Structure and Functions of the Human Body". These lectures were significant: indeed, it was here in a small room in Bothwell to an audience comprising mainly farming folk that he began, though perhaps unaware of it at the time, the long, difficult and often frustrating task of attempting to educate the Public in the ways of health. However, the Bothwellans in 1839 found much in the lectures to interest them; the room was crowded and the Literary Society flourished.

Hall's first lecture, an introductory one, the details of which are lost, was followed on September 20 by a second describing the muscles, tendons, their various attachments, forms, power and size. To illustrate the force of the muscles, Hall told the story of Damien who was sentenced to have his limbs torn asunder by four horses while still alive, as punishment for his attempt to assassinate Louis XV; this the horses failed to do. He spoke of the strength of the prehensile tail of the opossum and the kangaroo, and in describing the various mechanical parts of the body referred to animals and birds as well as man. Hall's third lecture on October 16 firmly established his reputation as an entertaining, vigorous, and stimulating lecturer who was willing to spend considerable time in careful preparation for the advancement of knowledge. He and Moss, a man of a similar turn of mind, worked well together, their efforts being much appreciated by the audience. This time Hall concentrated on the blood and circulatory system, enlightening his audience of the "beautiful double circulation through the arteries and veins", and "clearly illustrating the wonderful organization by which the human race was capable of withstanding opposite extremes of temperature". He spoke of the importance of the skin to the preservation of health, impressing

the necessity of a general knowledge of the anatomy and functions of the human body to prevent imposture and our defeating by ignorant measures the means employed by our medical attendants to restore us to health.⁶

and directing his remarks to the feminine section of his audience, who, no doubt, were highly corsetted, a pernicious fashion which he strongly deplored. He also used many of his own "beautiful" drawings and "anatomical preparations" and a painting of a human skeleton, almost six feet high, by the Treasurer and Librarian, Moss, on which he placed the various models of the muscles, heart, blood vessels and so on, as he described them. In conclusion he displayed the model of a portable hot air bath which he had invented for use in cases of suspended animation,

as, by the attachment of a spirit lamp, the heat, regulated at will, could be raised under a coverlet in a few minutes to 212^o Fahrenheit. He explained that a similar apparatus was given to Queen Adelaide by Lady Bedingfield. The Courier commented that Hall

.... succeeded completely, by divesting his discourses as much as possible of technicalities, in making them perfectly comprehensible to his auditory who showed their appreciation of his talents and ability by repeated plaudits.⁶

Undoubtedly the new surgeon was a valuable asset. Before his arrival the Committee had viewed with considerable fear for the Society's interests the departure from the district of many of its valuable members. Now, at the conclusion of Hall's lectures, the Secretary reported that there was a considerable increase in the number of members since last year and that the Society had acquired new strength, enlarged its resources, secured greater public interest and was well on its way to achieving its great object, "a permanent and prominent position in the estimation of the community at large".⁷ Unfortunately, the Society suffered the loss of Moss who, both as a lecturer and an artist, had fostered much interest. On his departure from the district in November 1839 Hall added his name to the list of forty seven members who addressed a Public Testimonial to him.⁸

After nine months Hall's position was well established: when a serious fire occurred at the Brewery in March 1840, it was he who on March 9 wrote a letter, signed by Schaw and four others, commending to Franklin the brave conduct of three convicts, E. Arnott, N. Thomson and J. Jones.⁹ As in Brighton, his home became the focus for the Roman Catholics in the district. Whenever Father Cotham of Richmond visited Bothwell on his country rounds, services were held in Hall's house. When a committee of the Messrs Wilkinson, Allardyce, McDowall, Wheatley and Anderson organized a splendid Ball and supper held on Monday, March 16, Hall was appointed Master of Ceremonies, whose duties he conducted with such courtesy and ability "as greatly to enhance the pleasure and gratification of all present". According to the Courier, the ball was an outstanding success.

Dancing commenced at an early hour and was kept up with unabated spirit until the morning. The ballroom was brilliantly lighted

⁶ Courier, Nov. 8, 1839.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Courier, Jan. 3, 1840.

⁹ C.S.O. 5/234/5936.

and elegantly decorated; at the upper end was a medallion of the Queen, painted on a ground of imperial purple and encircled with the appropriate wreath of the laurel and white roses; at the lower end was placed the Tasmanian Arms, surrounded with wattle, English oak and roses; these paintings were from the versatile pencil of Mr P. Moss, who obligingly lent his services on the occasion; about one o'clock the company repaired to the supper table which was profusely supplied with all the luxuries of the season, by the landlord of the Crown Inn; the apartment which was spacious exhibited proofs of the great exertions and good taste of the committee who drew largely on the beauties of Flora and the sweets of Pomona for its embellishments. Supper being rendered, Dr Hall as Chairman, moved the first toast "the Queen", in a speech of great neatness and spirit, which was followed by the new version of the National Anthem, "God Save the Queen" arranged by the Chairman, especially for the occasion and sung by amateurs; then followed the toast of "Sir John Franklin and the land of our adoption", Air "Rule Britannia" and "Lady Franklin and the Ladies of the Colony" tune "Green Grow the Rushes".

The health of the stewards and also that of the Master of Ceremonies, was proposed and drunk with enthusiasm. At intervals in the course of the evening the company was entertained by the stirring sounds of old Scotia, admirably played by Hector McRae Esq. The assembly was characterized by a feature as new as it was desirable; the arrangements being such as to preclude the possibility of any exclusive feeling being evinced and the company departed highly delighted with the evening's entertainment.¹⁰

Socially successful though Hall was, it was not long before his position as Assistant District Surgeon with its professional responsibilities brought him into open conflict with Schaw and his friends. At that time, the Major's son, G.C. Schaw, was stationed near the Big Lake surveying between thirty and forty miles from Bothwell. In the party was William Potts aged thirty, his assigned servant, who had been suffering from sore and tender eyes for the preceding six months. His complaint gradually worsened until he could no longer work, and he was forced to stay in the hut, blind. Twice his request to see the doctor was refused; once before, and again on Monday, March 9, when a suitable cart, owned by T. Patterson, was leaving for Bothwell. However, on the following Friday, March 13, he left under the care of another of Schaw's men, T. Burgess. Before leaving he applied for his rations as he had none, but was told that Schaw refused to issue him any as he was being returned to the Government useless on assignable service. On arrival in Bothwell

¹⁰ Courier, March 27, 1840.

on the Saturday evening he and Burgess were put into the watch-house, though without charge, by the order of the Assistant Police Magistrate. The next morning Burgess took Potts to have his eyes examined by Hall who found most formidable inflammation existing. To his horror Hall learned that Potts had eaten nothing since the previous Friday morning. He immediately sent the Watch-house Keeper to the Police Magistrate to advise him of the situation, requesting that the sick man be placed under his care in the building nominally called the hospital. Schaw agreed, but said that the man must starve until his son returned from Oatlands from whence he was expected in an hour or two. Hall waited all Sunday to hear from the younger Schaw what was to be done. In the evening he directed a note to the Senior Schaw:

I have been waiting all day to hear from your son what was to be done for the assigned servant of his who is suffering so severely from inflammation in both eyes - I fear if the man's account be correct, the case will create a great stir and prove a very unpleasant business - It appears he had been ill for six weeks - and now it will be next to a miracle if his sight can be saved - He is certainly not in a fit state to be sent to Hospital in town or New Norfolk but requires prompt treatment and every comfort on the spot to give him a chance of escaping irremediable blindness. I am quite certain were I to recommend his removal I should subject myself to a severe and merited reprimand. He is without rations and, I believe, bedding, and states that he has been so since Friday morning and states not a morsel has passed his lips this day. Will you be good enough to take some steps forthwith or I shall be placed in a position I have every wish and desire to avoid.

Waiting anxiously your answer.

Schaw replied that no answer was required. As it was Sunday evening and no shops were open, Hall immediately sent to Potts half the only loaf of bread in his own house with a jug of tea. A short time later, a messenger arrived to say Schaw wished to see him at the hospital. Expecting to be thanked for his courtesy, Hall was deeply shocked on being accosted in the street by Schaw, who rudely expressed his surprise that Hall should have sent him such a note. Walking into the hospital where Potts, Burgess, the Chief Constable and two Post Messengers were, Hall again questioned Potts concerning his statements, which he affirmed. Schaw then denied that the Watch-House Keeper had told him in the morning that the men were without rations, but this the Keeper later in the presence of the others said was not true. That evening Hall began his treatment of Pott's eyes by bleeding him profusely, blistering him behind the neck, administering

Calomel and opium every hour and fomenting the eyes with a tepid decoction of white poppy capsule. As surgeon to the Liverpool Dispensaries he had found this treatment very successful. The next morning G.C. Schaw called upon Hall and denied that the man was without rations, stating that he had not thought the case was too urgent as the man had always suffered with sore eyes. In any case he intended to return the man to the Government that day in the usual way. Hall argued that, according to the regulations, Schaw could not do this while the man was suffering from an acute disease, especially as the so-called hospital was only a building unprovided with any requirements for the treatment of the sick. Later Hall was informed that Schaw had returned the man to the Government, and as he was not in the watch-house, he could not be supplied with rations. Consequently Hall was left with the sick man on his hands, supplying him with all the necessities of life from his own purse. Perplexed as to the correct procedure he asked for official instructions on March 19 from Officer, who concurred in his opinion of the Schaws' actions and submitted the case for Franklin's consideration. As a result Schaw, though strongly excusing himself and his son from any guilt, was firmly reprimanded by the Government; Hall, it was agreed, had acted "with much feeling and kindness".¹¹ This unfortunate incident served only to add more fuel to the fire of hostility which the Assistant Police Magistrate already entertained towards the Doctor.

That pernicious emotion was affecting other residents of Bothwell too, due sometimes to local causes, at others to factors affecting the whole colony, especially the many changes taking place in the British Government's policy on convicts. Many felt that the new Probation System could not succeed; they were concerned at the lack of free immigrants to supply their demands for labour now that assignment was to cease; and they were outraged at what they considered unjustifiable insults poured upon them over their treatment of assigned servants. Article after article in the press condemning the Probation System confirmed their own opinions.

Closer at hand and more disturbing was the hostility between the Presbyterian and Episcopalian sects which had broken out into open conflict. For many years the two groups worked harmoniously together, the Presbyterians under Garrett's guidance, and the Episcopalians under the Reverend Dr Drought, a visiting clergyman from Green Ponds, sharing their services in the small, stone chapel of St. Luke's which had been opened

¹¹ C.S.O. 5/235/5965.

jointly for services by the two ministers in 1831. Much of the harmony in which the two sects worked was due to the friendship between Garrett and Drought, but the latter resigned from Green Ponds in 1834, and with the appointment of a full time minister to Bothwell in the person of the Reverend T. Wigmore things were never the same again. Both sects claimed the church as their own and wished to expel the other from its use. Finally the case was referred to the Legislative Council for a decision. In the meantime Episcopalian and Presbyterian adherents outwardly and cordially disliked each other.¹² Hall, a Roman Catholic and a religious outsider, did his best to remain friendly with both sides, a position which was difficult to maintain.

Of far more concern to everyone was the state of the Bothwell Police Force on the efficiency of which the settlers, especially those living on isolated farms, depended for their protection from bushrangers. As matters stood, they had little faith either in its ability to protect them or even in its willingness to do so. As protection from the loss of valuable and often irreplaceable property, and even of life itself, were absolutely essential to their survival in a harsh, pioneering environment, the failure of the officials paid by the Government to protect them aroused bitter, angry feelings. In November 1840, there occurred an incident which demonstrated the ineffectual character of the Police. On the 16th bushrangers robbed Reis' farm, seven miles from the Police Office, of arms, ammunition and provisions; on the same day they were seen and spoken to on the highway near the same place; two men were sent to investigate, but nothing came of it. On November 24 three constables were sent in pursuit of the gang, but they were given no ammunition and had to provide their own. At the height of the trouble, on November 28, Schaw, whom everyone expected would show some zeal in directing operations, departed for Hobart Town to see the Regatta. During his absence several more robberies were committed and two shepherds on an outlying property were murdered. Subsequently, the two constables who were sent out to get the bodies of the murdered men were given no ammunition to protect themselves or to capture the enemy. Later, a woman, who had cohabitated with one of the bushrangers, reported that they would visit Chivers' Hotel six miles from Bothwell at a certain time. When the three constables who had been dispatched to capture them entered the room, presented their guns and demanded a surrender or be destroyed, the bushrangers jumped up, threw up the constables' muzzles, two of which went off, and walked off. The

¹² Colonial Times, Sept. 29, 1840.

situation was intolerable. When four additional runaways were reported to be lurking in the district, the shepherds took the matter into their own hands and formed a band to chase them.¹³ Hall, too, played a small part in the drama, driving to the Great Lake to give evidence at the inquest held there on December 11 on the two murdered men, W. Trueson, a free man, and W. Clark, an assigned servant to a Mr Brodribb. Because of this "disgraceful" failure of the Police to achieve any results, and the subsequent mismanagement by Schaw of twelve men who were sent by the Government to help with the harvest, the Chief Police Magistrate at last investigated the complaints lodged against Schaw by Captain W. Clarke J.P., one of the settlers. Much to the annoyance of the residents, however, and especially to Clarke who declined to take any further part in the enquiry, the investigation was held in private.¹⁴ At its conclusion Schaw remained, whilst the people were left frustrated, their problem still unsolved.

Nevertheless, as the year 1841 progressed, there were other matters besides these vexations to claim Hall's attention. On May 24, a fifth daughter was born to Mary and christened Alexandrina. A devoted family man himself, Hall was distressed to hear in June of the sudden death of a fellow surgeon, E. Fosbrooke, the Medical Officer at Flinders Island, whose family was left in straitened circumstances. With twenty-five other subscribers he donated one guinea to a fund established by the Principal Medical Officer for the widow.¹⁵ Considering Hall's large household and the fact that his own salary was only 15/- per day this was a very generous donation.

Also, there were new medical regulations with which Hall was concerned. These demanded some readjustments both in attitudes to medical staff and in the organization of medical departments. When Clarke arrived to take up the position of Principal Medical Officer, he was invited by Franklin to offer any propositions which he thought desirable for the improvement of the Medical Department. In a report to the Director-General of Hospitals on June 15, 1840, he detailed what he considered to be the essential cause operating against any improvement, and proposed that in future no person who was a convict, or had been a convict, should be

¹³ Colonial Times, Dec. 22, 1840.

¹⁴ Colonial Times, Jan. 5, 1841.

¹⁵ Colonial Times, Jan. 8, 1841.

employed as a Medical Attendant, a Dispenser in a hospital, a Medical Clerk and so on.¹⁶ On May 26, 1841, his suggestion was adopted and instructions were issued by the Colonial Secretary:

I am directed to acquaint you that His Excellency considers that the practice of appointing men of this class to such situations, is, as regards its effect upon convict discipline, very objectionable. I have therefore to convey to you His Excellency's request that you will use every exertion to procure the services of competent individuals who will be free from the objection alluded to, to supply the places of those now so employed and it is further His Excellency's desire that none but respectable persons may in future be recommended for the offices in question.¹⁷

Emancipists, particularly, were affected by the new regulation. Even Clarke, its proposer, found that it was not altogether satisfactory. In less than a month, on June 22, he advised the Governor that, though he was insisting on strict obedience to the orders,

rigid adherence to this rule has already caused much embarrassment and is likely to increase it until I can obtain from England individuals not belonging to the above objectionable class .

He asked that in certain specified cases, men of known good character, freed by servitude, might still be employed. He mentioned particularly W. Coleman whom he wished to employ as Dispenser in the Hobart Town Hospital at a salary of 2/6 per day to fill the vacancy created by a resignation. But both the Colonial Secretary and the Governor were adamant that the regulation should be strictly observed in every case. Finally Clarke proposed that suitable, qualified persons should be sought in England to fill any vacancies, to which the Governor agreed.¹⁸ Meanwhile, the regulation caused considerable inconvenience and increased work to medical staff. No doubt, it also caused distress and bad feeling amongst the Emancipists themselves, and initiated other attacks upon them by the press and the Public.

During the first six months of 1841, Hall still found the time to prepare lectures carefully for the Bothwell Literary Society. On July 29, under the chairmanship of W. Clarke of the "Hunting Ground", he delivered the opening lecture of the season to a crowded audience in the new schoolroom, his subject "The Structure and Functions of the Organs of

¹⁶ C.S.O. 5/243/6353.

¹⁷ C.S.O. 5/287/7566.

¹⁸ Ibid.

Respiration". After briefly reviewing his former lectures, he discussed the purpose of respiration in the various forms of animal and vegetable life, showing that aeration of the blood is as important as food itself. He then described the process of respiration in a polypus (the hydraviridis), in a hydatid (the monas terms), and in insects, using large, coloured drawings of the apollo butterfly, a caterpillar, and a pediculus to illustrate his points. Describing the respiration of fishes, he gave a vivid and exciting account of the death of a whale; finally he spoke of the respiration of birds and the human being. As he lectured many large coloured drawings were tacked to a human skeleton, to be followed by the pièce de résistance, the dissected lungs and windpipe of a kid which he repeatedly inflated to the delight of his audience. The lecture concluded by emphasizing the importance of respiration to health "and gave a few brief but forcible rules for guidance". According to the Courier

The lecture abounded throughout with the most interesting and useful information on the various topics which it embraced and was distinguished by the beauty, perspicuity and energy of the style, and the felicitous mode of expression which characterize all the discourses of that gentleman.

As an interesting sidelight the Courier also congratulated the society on having obtained a lecture room so much superior and more comfortable than their previous one, as regards seeing, hearing, light and warmth.¹⁹

During the winter of 1841 the Bothwellans in exasperation decided to tackle one of their biggest problems, the road from the township to the high road at Cross Marsh, now called Melton Mowbray. As this was their only link with the outside world, the route by which all their farm produce reached the markets, its poor state was a persistent source of irritation and despair. A correspondent of the Colonial Times, "Quid Nunc", declared,

the internal communications of the colony have become so bad that a bushell of wheat can be brought from London to Hobart Town, a distance of 16,000 miles, at rather less risk and expense than it can from Bothwell to the same place, a distance of little more than forty.

and in more eloquent language described the state of the road itself,

.... Look down the frightful precipice, the saddle, next turn your eyes to that steep sandy bason, the Den Hill; the Governor has never yet been able to surmount it, without the assistance of the neighbouring settlers' horses, which, having been bred to the work, are the only cattle able to face the difficulties of such a way. There may be seen scattered

¹⁹ Courier, Aug. 6, 1841.

alongside the roadway many a whitened skeleton, the victims of this heart-breaking hill, crying out shame on our rulers, and for mercy on their surviving fellows. Then again there is that very 'slough of despond' the road along White's side line from the Jordan where carts may be seen sticking in the mud for days together - truly if in the winter Sir John could be persuaded to go to Bothwell would he then see with his own eyes, hear with his own ears and stick in the mud that his own and his Director-General of Works' apathy has permitted to continue year after year, increasing in depth and difficulty.²⁰

As Hall likewise suffered from the bad state of the roads and bush tracks as he drove in his gig round his large and scattered district to see his patients and perform his many official duties, he willingly joined seventeen other prominent members of the community to petition Schaw to convene a public meeting so that arrangements might be made to obtain probationary convicts.²¹ At the first meeting on August 18, the request for a gang was forwarded to the Superintendent-General of the Probation System; at a second meeting on September 4 his reply was discussed. Certainly, the Government would give a probation gang to any district applying for one, provided the inhabitants made over ten acres of land and undertook to build permanent barracks upon it and temporary huts of the usual kind in the meantime. The Superintendent even sent plans for the barracks which the meeting, then and there, decided would cost three to four thousand pounds and take two years to erect. Of course, the residents were indignant. Surely the Governor knew that the population was less than one thousand; that already the district was impoverished by the annual loss of twelve thousand pounds to absentee landlords who had been driven away by poor local misrule; that the distance of road was only twelve miles, and that to build barracks was stupid as the working party would be continually advancing. As twelve miles of cross country road should be made passable by fifty men in six years, or three hundred men in eighteen months, to build barracks and give ten acres of land would be paying the Government two thousand pounds a year for the hire of the gang. "Quid Nunc" cynically summed up the situation

The extent of road sought to be made is only twelve miles, and supposing magnificent Barracks built in the very centre of the line, the gang working towards either extremity would have to march (to crown the farce, à la militaire, and in solemn silence) so say the rules, six miles out to work and six miles back to supper, of itself, a harder day's work without a single stroke of labour on the roads than any probation man is ever likely to perform.²²

Of course, nothing was done and the Bothwellans were left with their problem.

²⁰ Colonial Times, Sept. 28, 1841.

²¹ Courier, Aug. 3, 1841.

²² Colonial Times, Sept. 28, 1841.

Resentment at the Government's failure to appreciate fully their road problem was still simmering when the townspeople received another shock which absorbed their attention. Four days after the second road meeting, on Wednesday, September 8, Hall attended the Annual Meeting of the Bothwell Literary Society under the chairmanship of W. Allardyce, its purpose to receive the Secretary's report of the state of the Library and the number of members, to audit the Treasurer's accounts, and to elect the officers and committee for the next half year. The only members present were Allardyce, Secretary Wigmore, the Librarian who was also the Chief Constable, the Police Clerk, Garrett, Hall, Schaw and one other. However, before the Chairman was able to introduce the ordinary business of the meeting, Schaw, who had not attended any meeting of the Society for more than two years, moved the resolution

That the proceedings of a former General meeting at which Mr H.M. Cokerill, an Emancipist, was elected a member, should be rescinded.

Explaining his resolution, Schaw objected that the proceedings were invalid as due notice had not been given. When this was refuted by Wigmore, he altered his objection to the fact that the ballot box had not been used as the rules required. He further maintained

That no man who had ever been under the ban of the law, ever should have been or ever ought to be admitted into the society, and he regretted that any members should entertain contrary statements. He hoped the question would never again be mooted.

The resolution was seconded by the Librarian who also was an Emancipist. Hall, who arrived while Schaw was speaking, instantly objected that Schaw was using "a miserable technicality" as a basis for a severe and illiberal attack; that many other members, including the motion's seconder, were Emancipists; he utterly disagreed with the unchristian principle advocated; furthermore, he was a very active member, devoting a great deal of his time and what little talent he had to furthering its aims, but if he thought the Society would agree to the exclusion of any man who, having satisfied the justice of the law, desired its benefits for himself and his children, he, Hall, would have nothing more to do with it - "he would not expend his energy for the benefit of the exclusive few". Finally, he begged the members present not to agree to such an outrageous insult to so numerous and deserving a body as the Emancipists generally were. He proposed an amendment that the election of Cockerill be held valid, though the ballot box was not used. Hall's amendment was seconded by Garrett who declared

he was shocked by Schaw's unchristian principles, and that he considered Cockerill with his large, growing family a very suitable member. He drew the meeting's attention to the fact that exclusion of any class was not intended when the Society was formed mainly by his own efforts; that the Mechanics Institute in Hobart Town, and the Masonic Lodges, as shown by a recent letter in the press by the Grand Master, the Duke of Leinster, were not opposed to their membership. Wigmore also spoke at some length, pledging himself to support Cockerill's readmission at some future meeting, although at the present time he was anxious to see that the rules of the Society were complied with. When the motion was put to the vote, it was carried: Schaw, Wigmore, the Chief Constable, the Police Clerk and another voting for it, Hall and Garrett for the amendment. Hall then moved that Cockerill be reelected at the next meeting at which more members he hoped would be present to give their opinions on such an important question. The adjourned meeting was set down for September 15.²³

During the intervening week feelings in the small community ran high, with members lining up on both sides according to their views on freedom, justice and equal opportunities for all. Hall, for his part, did his best to encourage as many members as possible to be present at the next meeting. During the week he was puzzled too by the attitude of Wigmore at the first meeting, when he asserted that

as the meetings were usually very thinly attended, it might occur that a combination of these Emancipists, or what shall I call them, Democrats, might destroy the society

and by his obvious reluctance to put up notices, one of his duties as Secretary. Schaw also employed his own methods of retaliation against Hall's opposition by forwarding to the Chief Police Magistrate in Hobart Town a letter of complaint written by E.T. Arnott, an assigned servant of Hall's. These papers were sent on to the Governor. About the time of the second Society meeting, Hall was shocked when he received two letters, one from the Colonial Secretary, and one from the Chief Police Magistrate. The Colonial-Secretary's letter read:

14th September 1841.

Sir,

The papers in reference to a convict, named Arnott representing the mode of obtaining payment from him, adopted by you for medical attendance on his wife, by the stopping of his rations during the time he was on loan to you, having been laid before the Lieut-Governor, I am

instructed to inform you that His Excellency cannot approve of this course of proceeding towards a prisoner of the Crown. As without his rations for so long a period, a convict on loan could not have supported his family in a correct manner if the established regulations had been duly enforced by you.

His Excellency therefore directs that Arnott be withdrawn from your service and in informing you that the proceedings in this case were very irregular, I am to request that the instructions respecting assigned servants or prisoners on loan shall henceforth be strictly complied with.²⁴

As Hall's reputation with the Government was now in jeopardy, the Cockerill Affair was a very serious matter.

Franklin, however, though concerned for the welfare of assigned servants, did not wish to interfere in the internal management of any society. He therefore firmly declined to give his opinion as to whether Emancipists should be elected members of the Bothwell Literary Society when asked to do so by Wigmore several days before the meeting, a fact which was not discovered until some time later by members. In complete ignorance of Wigmore's attempt to surprise them by an "official verdict", nineteen out of the twenty-five members of the Society were present at the adjourned meeting held under Clarke's chairmanship. After the reading of the minutes of the last meeting, Hall immediately explained what had happened and strongly criticised the exclusion of Emancipists. In spite of frequent disorderly interruption, no one was prepared to combat his arguments. At its conclusion, the Librarian, feeling his position untenable, resigned and left the meeting. Schaw did not attend. With Cockerill reelected the large crowd felt that justice and freedom had triumphed. Hall was unanimously elected Librarian and with Garrett and Wigmore was appointed to a committee to revise the laws of the Society.

The Cockerill Affair created quite a stir, not only in Bothwell, but in other parts of the colony as well. From an editorial in the Colonial Times on September 21, 1841, it appeared that this attack on an Emancipist was one of many fostered by some sections of the press and occurring at that time, possibly sparked off, as was suggested earlier, by the Government's attitude to the employment of Emancipists in the Medical Department. The editorial strongly condemned Schaw's action as that of a man affected by the moon, deliberately trying to create ill-feeling and disharmony in a small community. Hall's address was considered "well worthy of the utmost attention and did credit to his head and heart".

²⁴ C.S.O. 22/1/207.

Schaw's removal from Bothwell was recommended to the Government.

As far as Cockerill was concerned the affair was finished, but for other members of the Literary Society it was not so; the problem of Schaw still 'remained', the Arnott incident still smouldered, and, although few people in Bothwell realized it, a firebrand, its true character well concealed till now, was in their midst in the person of Wigmore. This gentleman, of whom little is known before his appointment to Bothwell as Chaplain to the Church of England, possessed a highly excitable temperament which was unable to let matters lie. Elected Secretary to the Society a short time before in lieu of Garrett, who had retired after many years' faithful service, Wigmore so irritated Hall by his inefficiency that the latter often felt compelled to assume many secretarial duties himself, as he had done on September 8 when he laid the business of the meeting before the Chairman. It was on this occasion, too, that Wigmore began to reveal a little of the intense antagonism, previously masked in friendship, which he felt for Garrett and Hall. On September 16 this hostility finally erupted. Asked by the Treasurer, A. McDowall, to give him a voucher for the repayment of five guineas to Hall for the purchase of library books, he became violently insulting, and, speaking in language incomprehensible to others, refused to do so. When requisitioned by a quorum of the committee to call a general meeting for October 5 to consider the contents of a note received by the Treasurer from the Secretary, he ignored the request, whereupon copies of the same requisition, the date transferred to October 7, were put up in all the usual places including the church door. These he tore down; finally written circulars were sent to all members to announce the meeting. Although previously moderate in his statements, he now began to make such violent denunciations from the pulpit of St. Luke's that F.S. Horne of Ratho complained to the Government and withdrew all connection with the church.²⁵ In addition he wrote extraordinary letters to the Colonial Times published on September 28 and October 5, in which he inveighed against Horne and Hall and advocated the extinction of the Literary Society. To what extent Schaw incited Wigmore to such behaviour it is impossible to say, but there is no doubt that the latter strongly defended Schaw against his attackers. Schaw, of course, did not expect his ally to do all the fighting but engaged in his own particular line of attack. On September 21, 1841, he wrote a letter to Wigmore requesting that he put down in writing a statement alleged to have

²⁵ Colonial Times, Sept. 28, Oct. 5, 1841.

been made by Hall concerning himself, "that he would not rest satisfied until he has succeeded in affecting my removal", giving as his reason that he wished to submit it to the Governor, as such conduct by Hall was subversive of good order and should be stopped.²⁶ Wigmore obliged immediately, adding with rather a flourish that Hall had even stated that Schaw's removal had been ordered and the place of banishment named. These two letters Schaw forwarded to the Chief Police Magistrate, Forster, with a covering letter in which he claimed he had avoided Hall for reasons of his own on every occasion since his arrival in the district, and that he had given him no justification for his attack. He concluded, 'It is impossible for me to describe the injury he has done to me in the district'. Forster directed them to the Colonial Secretary, writing in sympathy with Schaw.

Such conduct on the part of the Assistant District Surgeon must be extremely detrimental to the interests of the District and that unless Dr Hall can satisfy His Excellency upon the point on which the complaint is made, I think it is most desirable that he should be moved to some other district

Together with a letter from Wigmore, they finally reached the Governor who demanded an explanation from Hall. On October 4 the Principal Medical Officer advised the Colonial Secretary that he considered Hall had proved himself innocent of the charges brought against him by Schaw. Hall also replied on October 4 to Wigmore's invectives in a lengthy communication to the Colonial Times, in which he detailed in words biting with sarcasm his own and Wigmore's part in the Cockerill Affair. He made his own attitude perfectly clear.

.... The library is open to every member and few there are who do not make use of some of the nearly six hundred volumes it contains. The doors of the lecture room are thrown open to all who choose to enter - members or not, rich or poor, bond or free. The only monopoly I have witnessed has been a monopoly of its labours and of those labours I have not only had to transact my own share, as a lecturer, as an active member of the Committee, and now as Librarian - but also either to see its affairs go wreck (which I will never do for lack of exertion whilst I am identified with it) or help both the Rev. Mr Wigmore and the late librarian to do that which they wanted either zeal or industry to do for themselves

Indeed, Wigmore's "quixotic wrath" against him was due, not to gallantry in protecting Schaw against attack as he made out, but rather to a petty, private grudge based on a false assumption, and as such merited nothing but pity and disgust.

²⁶ C.S.O. 22/8/284.

The meeting announced for October 7 duly took place with McDowall in the chair. But it was not destined to get very far. As the Requisition calling the meeting was about to be read, Wigmore violently protested. On being called to order by the Chairman he replied, "Hold your tongue, Sir - a clergyman must defend himself against such men as you - I am outrageous, as I am determined the business shall not proceed". At the height of his tirade, Schaw rushed into the room, furiously threatening to call in the police to turn them all out, and rushed out again. With Wigmore continually interfering and the Chief Constable refusing to act, the business of the meeting went on. Finally, as his misdeeds as Secretary were brought to the attention of the members, it was unanimously resolved on the motion of R. McKenzie, seconded by E. Nicholas, that Wigmore be expelled. Allardyce was elected in his place. Amidst insults directed by Wigmore against Horne of Ratho, Captain J. Clarke and John Clarke of Cluny, the meeting came to an end. Hall, as Librarian, was instructed from the chair to take possession of the library key and not to give it to anyone without authority.²⁷ That evening John Clarke J.P. wrote an indignant letter to the Colonial Secretary, complaining of Schaw's conduct.

.... The conduct of Major Schaw upon this occasion, although confined in its immediate operation to the members of the society, is no more a private question. It bears a more public aspect, it strikes at the root of the liberties of the subject, wherever Major Schaw can exercise any magisterial control....²⁸

Clarke also pointed out that the library room was built with Arthur's permission at the Society's expense, and was attached to the outer wall of the Police Office, but in no way connected with it; that lectures were open to every class, free of charge; that all decent persons were allowed to use the library on payment of a subscription, and that no political or religious subjects were discussed. In short, nothing but regular business was ever introduced.

The next day about noon Hall and Garrett saw Wigmore walking along a street with two library books under his arm. At the library they found the door wrenched open with the boss head of the lock broken. Schaw was sitting at the front of the room reading a book. When Wigmore arrived, Hall asked to see the Encyclopaedia he was carrying, but was

²⁷ Colonial Times, Oct. 26, 1841.

²⁸ Colonial Times, Oct. 19, 1841.

refused and called "you dirty swab". Schaw merely laughed. Soon after a padlock was put on the door and members locked out of their own library.

The small township seethed with indignation. The following day, October 9, Hall and Garrett forwarded to Franklin documents containing a full description of what happened together with the minutes of the last meeting. However, they were advised on October 19 that he could not interfere, as the matter was not connected with Government.²⁹ Hall and Garrett had to be content with publication of the documents in the Colonial Times for the Public to make its own judgment.³⁰ Presumably, however, Franklin felt that the Bothwellans had suffered enough under Schaw's unpredictable jurisdiction. On November 2, 1841, the Colonial Times announced that he had been removed to Richmond. Now anxious to obtain repossession of its books and other apparatus, valued at five hundred pounds, the Committee approached Franklin a second time on November 26 to ask for authority to re-enter the locked room. This was granted on December 3.³¹ After almost two months without books, the library reopened to the Public in a different building.

By early December social life was almost back to normal though there were some residents who thought that the events of the last few months had taken their toll and life would never be the same again, especially as Garrett had decided to leave the district. A man of an amiable and peaceful disposition and one who had worked hard for many years to foster the community's improvement and welfare, he was loved and respected by all. Now, distressed by the bickering between the two sects using St. Luke's and the events of the past few months, he decided to seek a new area for his ministry. Moreover, although Schaw had gone, Wigmore created a problem which Hall and his friends, the two Hornes (father and son), especially found tiresome. Indeed, all three were compelled by his attempts to slander them in the press to take out actions for libel in the Supreme Court. These were to be heard in March 1842.

Wigmore's attempts to discredit Hall were particularly nasty and detrimental to his position as District Assistant Surgeon. Though there is no evidence to show whether Hall was innocent or guilty in the

²⁹ C.S.O. 22/10/41.

³⁰ Colonial Times, Oct. 26, 1841.

³¹ C.S.O. 22/10/41.

Arnott affair, Schaw and Wigmore certainly attempted to capitalize out of it. In mid October, 1841, Thomas McDowell of the Van Diemen's Land Chronicle received a letter, signed "Vindex", detailing the following facts: A man, Arnott, was assigned to Hall who attended his servant's wife and family professionally; in payment Arnott's rations were stopped; later, when Arnott was away from the settlement, Hall attended his wife in her confinement at which time she died; for this he in a day or two sent in his account, and on Arnott being unable to pay it, took away his pig after having it valued, and that not being sufficient, took away the trough too. However, McDowell refused to publish the letter unless the author gave his name. Soon after Wigmore called upon him with a letter from the author who declared himself to be M. Robinson, the Police Clerk of Bothwell. McDowell, who knew nothing of Robinson, asked Wigmore if the facts were correct and if Robinson could be trusted. On being assured that they were, McDowell published Robinson's letter on October 22. In view of Hall's behaviour and attitude to the assigned servants of other people, it was a particularly vicious libel. Unfortunately, of Arnott himself nothing is known except that he was commended for bravery during the brewery fire. What part the Police Clerk played is also uncertain. According to Wigmore's own statement, he was a "most unassuming character" and therefore unlikely to perpetrate such a libel except under pressure.³²

The year 1841 closed with another lecture delivered by Hall on December 29 to the Literary Society. Continuing his series on the organs of the body, he spoke on the "Structure and Functions of the Organs of the Voice", illustrating his theme as usual with many of his own drawings, beautifully executed. The lecture, described as "one of the most interesting and instructive ever delivered at the institution" was given to an exceptionally large audience, for a bigger crowd than usual had gathered to see the surgeon carry out a very special duty, the presentation of a silver salver to Garrett as a token of their esteem and appreciation of his services as the founder and for many years active supporter of the Literary Society, both as a lecturer and secretary. In making the presentation, Hall spoke of a committee of six composed of members of three different religious sects, how two out of the three subscription lists had been left at the most public places, and of the list of subscribers which included almost everyone, nearly all the heads

³² Colonial Times, Oct. 5, 1841.

of poor free families as well as the more well-to-do. No such presentation had ever been made before in Bothwell. The salver, similar to the one presented to McKenzie by Hall when he was in Brighton, was made by Barclay in Hobart Town to his own design. In the centre of the salver, the circumference of which was almost three feet, was a shield supported by a kangaroo and an emu. Underneath was the inscription:

1841

Presented to the Rev. James Garrett by
The Members of the Bothwell Literary Society
and
Fifty-nine other inhabitants of the District
in token
Of their gratitude for his unceasing endeavours
for seven years
To elevate the moral and intellectual character
of the Community.

A wreath of wattle in bloom, richly chased, encircled the whole: on each of the feet was designed a pelican feeding its young, emblematical of the unremitting attention of the Reverend gentleman to the advancement, moral and intellectual, of the district.

Thanking the Public for its gift, Garrett said he was glad to hear the committee was in possession again of its property in a building away from the Police Office, and that arrangements were impending to have the books and other property placed in the hands of trustees to prevent any further unpleasant incidents.³³

January 1842 was a month Hall remembered clearly for the rest of his life. It commenced with a census for which he was appointed to take the count in the district of Bothwell. He collected forty-five returns, all completed in his own handwriting. His own household on January 1, 1842, numbered ten persons including five small girls all under eight years of age.³⁴ As the month proceeded, the hostilities of 1841 were forgotten as a new anxiety of a more serious nature beset the townspeople. Hall in fact found his time and attention increasingly occupied by demands on his medical skill. That which De Little had prophesied when District Assistant Surgeon at Brighton was now a reality. During the years 1839 to 1842, whilst the Halls were in Bothwell, slow, insidious changes had taken place in the state of the colony's health.

³³ Colonial Times, Jan. 11, 1842.

³⁴ C.E.N. 1/2 Census Returns 1842 Bothwell.

Scarcely perceptible at first, by 1842 they had become so obvious that the initial feeling of disquiet had now reached almost a state of panic. Previous to 1839, although there were potential bad spots as in Brighton, the colony had felt reasonably proud of its freedom from epidemic diseases, but with the huge influx of prisoners crowded together in large numbers in probation camps this was no longer true. The first inkling of serious trouble occurred in March 1840 when typhus fever broke out in the Penitentiary and spread to road gangs and the prisoners in gaol. Two hundred and twenty people were reported to be in the Hobart Town Hospital suffering from the disease.³⁵ As there was continual movement of prisoners from one penal establishment to another, often to a different area, the epidemic spread. It was especially bad in the Richmond district. Although it is possible that the epidemic was first introduced by newcomers, it was generally considered to be the result of the bad quality of the prisoners' food and the "sheer misery of their unhappy conditions". On March 27, 1840, Officer expressed his opinion of the fever

.... the prevailing fever, as it has appeared among the various convict establishments has generally been of a low typhoid character, requiring in its treatment the exhibition of stimulants in the very early stages. Its origin, we conceive, is chiefly to be attributed to an atmospheric cause, and its prevalence among the convicts to the unfavourable and peculiar circumstances under which this class of the community is placed³⁶

During the next two years the epidemic spread with varying intensity to most settled parts of the island, with few families escaping it altogether. By January 1842, it was prevalent in Bothwell causing Hall much hard work and anxiety. It also brought tragedy to his own family. On January 30 his infant daughter, Alexandrina, aged eight months and six days, died in spite of her father's ministrations.³⁷ As Mary and Edward were conscientious, loving parents, the effect of their daughter's death from such a cause was great indeed. Although it is not possible to define Hall's reactions to his own medical expertise, or rather to the lack of it, it is nevertheless true that the study and prevention of epidemic diseases became one of his major concerns as the years went by.

In March, Hall arranged for another surgeon to care for the Bothwell district while he journeyed to Hobart Town to be present at a

³⁵ True Colonist, March 6, 1840.

³⁶ True Colonist, March 27, 1840.

³⁷ Colonial Times, Feb. 1, 1842.

civil sitting of the Supreme Court at which his libel case against Wigmore was to be heard. This took place on March 21, with lawyers McDowell, Allport and Roberts appearing for Hall; Wigmore appeared in person, assisted by a Mr Midwood. According to the report there was little attempt made to prove whether Hall was guilty or not of the actions of which he was accused in Robinson's letter to the Chronicle; Dr Clarke and Mr Hone were merely asked to give their opinion on Robinson's statement. They agreed that, if true, his conduct was cruel and unsuited to a professional man. The jury found in favour of Wigmore.³⁸ Perhaps Hall derived some small comfort from hearing later that Wigmore, without enquiry or trial, was expelled from the Church of England and was returning to Britain.

On his return to Bothwell, Hall plunged oncemore into caring for a district in which the prevailing epidemic of typhus fever, or dysenteric bowel affection as it was sometimes called, was still raging. It was the sickliest season he had experienced in the colony, with more people in Bothwell dying in two months than had died during the previous three years for any cause whatsoever. He was especially concerned for assigned servants whose health and welfare he considered his prime responsibility as District Assistant Surgeon; in fact, it was mainly from this practice that the Government expected him to eke out a livelihood. Although the regulations stipulated that masters must obtain medical assistance for their servants, Hall knew this duty to be often neglected in their desire to escape the proper medical fees however small they might be, with dire consequences for the lives and health of the prisoners concerned. Several cases of the kind had already occurred in Bothwell: that of Pott's eyes, the case of a female servant assigned to the publican J. McDonald, and that of a man crippled for life from a large wealthy farm in the district. He knew, too, that it was a general practice amongst the settlers to send for the Prisoner Dispensers from road parties and such like, even when regular medical men were closer at hand. He knew one instance where a Prisoner Dispenser was allowed to attend a quite well-to-do settler's wife in her confinement - all to escape the payment of fees. Hall expressed his attitude clearly to Clarke,

Will any parent believe that had a child been so suddenly changed from robust health to such a state of disease that medical aid would not have been sought with the most anxious

³⁸ Chronicle, Oct. 15, Nov. 19, 1841.
Colonial Times Oct. 12, 1841.
 March 22, 29, 1842.

promptitude ? And ought not these forlorn outcasts, no longer free agents, no longer permitted to seek aid for themselves, but depending as entirely as children upon the care of their masters, to have been as kindly and humanely treated ? Justice and humanity both demanded it.

Hall's fears that some neglect would occur again at this time of widespread sickness were not unfounded. Soon after his return from Hobart Town he heard that Thomas Sadler had died from dysentery on April 4 after three weeks' illness. Sadler was an assigned servant of Captain Walter Synnott and his brother, Frederick, of the Hermitage, Shannon, a property ten miles from Bothwell. As neither Hall nor his assistant during his absence in Hobart Town had been summoned as the only doctor in the area to give medical aid, Hall's suspicions were immediately aroused but, without any real knowledge of the facts and proper evidence, he was in no position to interfere. The Synnotts, Irishmen from Ballymoyer, County Armagh, the elder of them an Assistant Police Magistrate, were considered to be wealthy, and Hall knew that, in the three years he had been in Bothwell, their payment to him of medical fees did not amount to ten pounds, not one sixpence of which was for assigned servants.

However, several weeks later on Friday, April 15, as Hall was on his medical rounds, he accidentally overtook on the Den Hill J. Walton, another assigned servant of the Synnotts, on his way to a sale at Green Ponds. On being questioned about Sadler's death, Walton gave Hall the details freely, adding his own comments; the Synnotts' property, the Hermitage, was a large one running many thousands of sheep; in addition, there were six hundred head of cattle with only three assigned servants to care for the lot; no free labour was employed; Walton did the work of three men; Walter Synnott, though a magistrate, would not get medical aid for the men but maintained a glass of grog would cure them; it was no use the servants complaining about anything to the local Assistant Police Magistrate, Barrow, as he was a friend to Synnott and often visited the Hermitage; any complaint would be met by some form of punishment.

The details of Sadler's death appalled Hall. A young man of twenty-five in the prime of life, a model of health and strength, Sadler had been in the service of the Synnotts for four years, during which time he had not lost a day off from work for sickness. Owing to some misdeed, he was sent away to Hobart Town to undergo solitary confinement. When he returned on February 6, he was so changed in appearance, so ill and

weak, that it was distressing to look at him. But the Synnotts made no attempt to find out the cause, nor to seek any medical aid. A month later, on March 8, though still very sick, he was made to walk sixty miles to Oatlands leading the stallion cart horse, Bolivar, which needed to be shod. On his return, after another sixty miles' walk, on Saturday, March 12, he was so ill and weak that he went to bed. The hut he lived in had no glass in the windows and was a considerable distance from the Synnotts' house. Although he begged his master to send for medical assistance, Synnott refused and with "an utter disregard for consequences" bled him and gave him a dose of Epsom salts. For two weeks he lay in the hut unattended; the cook from the Synnotts' house, too busy with the stock, rarely visited him to bring bread and tea which was all he could take; he was not even supplied with a utensil to prevent exposing himself to the weather both day and night during the frequent calls of nature; one night he was found in the bush, almost insensible, too weak to crawl back to the hut; no one knew how long he had been lying there; to satisfy his thirst he was even forced to crawl down to the river to get water himself. He begged Synnott to send him to hospital.

On March 20, two weeks before his death, the Synnotts, who still refused to send for the District Surgeon, called the Prisoner Dispenser of the Victoria Valley party. Mills, a prisoner who acted as a medical attendant to the gang, set out on foot to cover the thirteen or fourteen miles across most rugged country to reach the Hermitage. No horse was supplied for him either way; he was even lost for some time in the bush. During his absence from Victoria Valley he left one to two hundred men completely without any form of medical aid at a time when sickness was very prevalent. On his arrival he saw Sadler for whom he prescribed sago gruel and a "mustard poultice !!!" [Hall's exclamation marks] to the neck. The poultice was applied, but the Synnotts refused to send to Bothwell for the sago as a man would have to be taken off shearing the lambs. For eight days Sadler lay on the bed unable to rise; he could not drink; stools lay under him; he had pains in the stomach. The hut was so offensive that no one liked to go near him. On Sunday, April 3, Synnott ordered that Sadler be driven in a bullock cart to the hospital in Hobart Town, a distance of fifty-five miles and a journey of three days, although he knew an assigned servant could not go to a hospital without the approval of the District Assistant Surgeon, a history of previous treatment, and a bond for fees. But as there were

fears that Sadler would die during the ride, and it was raining too, it was put off. The next day Mills was sent for again but Sadler was dead before he arrived.

Hall, who during the typhus epidemic had been untiring in his efforts to visit numerous cases, knowing there would be no recompense for himself but the knowledge that he was alleviating human suffering, was shocked and angered that he had not been called. In cases of similar seriousness of symptoms as those which Sadler had displayed, he had visited twice or three times in twenty-four hours as required. In a whole month Sadler was visited only once and then only by a Dispenser. On April 18 Hall wrote a full description of the case to his senior, Clarke, who considered it serious enough to demand investigation and sent it on to the Colonial Secretary. On April 22, the Chief Police Magistrate was directed to order Barrow to hold an enquiry.

At the enquiry held on May 6, the Synnott brothers were charged with neglect towards Sadler; that he had died of dysentery without proper medical aid, attention, necessaries or comforts; that the hut in which he lay was an unfit place with no glass in the windows; that his request to be sent to hospital had been ignored and that he had been bled and dosed with Epsom salts by Walter Synnott. As the witnesses were mostly the assigned servants of the Synnotts who had been given ample time in which to browbeat and confuse them before the trial, Hall felt that the Government had little chance of eliciting the truth, especially as the presiding magistrate was a personal friend of the accused men and moreover angry that Hall had bypassed him by reporting the affair to Clarke. Barrow, in fact, found it difficult to control his annoyance over the affair and concluded his summary of the evidence on May 18 with

.... if for the future charges of this nature are to be made, the Police Magistrate should first be made acquainted with it as it would enable him to arrive more speedily at the truth, save the Government a great deal of trouble and I am confident prevent a great deal of unnecessary excitement which I fear has resulted from this enquiry and only tended to engender bad feelings and renew ancient feuds and differences which I had hoped time could have allayed in this district

Apparently Hall had made another enemy in the new Assistant Police Magistrate. None the less, in an effort to see some justice done, Hall conveyed his own impressions of the evidence to the Chief Police Magistrate, appealing to him to consider certain aspects of the case: that it was only Sunday when the Synnotts were prepared to consider the sick man; that humanity demanded he be given treatment; that the

Government expected very different medical attendance on assigned servants, and that Sadler's life was sacrificed for want of proper assistance. His final words were a challenge to the Government.

I trust His Excellency will take such steps in this case, as will be a warning not only to the Messrs Synnott but to Masters throughout the colony how they trifle with the lives of their assigned servants, a practice I regret to admit which is by no means uncommon.

However, the Government was not prepared to accept such a challenge. Clarke, when asked to give his opinion on the written evidence, claimed that Hall had not succeeded in proving many of his charges; doubtless there would not have been a fatal result if Hall had been called in, and doubtless Hall's case was difficult to prove when so many witnesses were assigned servants. The Chief Police Magistrate tactfully evaded the question altogether. On August 5 the official verdict was despatched to the Chief Police Magistrate:

After a careful perusal of the evidence taken by the Assistant Police Magistrate in the course of his enquiry, the Lieutenant-Governor has arrived at the conclusion that the allegations made by Mr Hall have not been sustained with the exception of the facts admitted by the Messrs Synnott themselves, that they did not procure the early regular attendance of a professional man and that they had treated the sick man according to their own judgment.

In other respects, His Excellency is of opinion that the evidence tends to show that Sadler received from the Messrs Synnott that degree of cure and attention which his situation demanded and you will convey to Dr Hall the expression of the Lieutenant-Governor's regret that he should have preferred such charges, indicative, His Excellency fears, of a spirit calculated most materially to diminish his usefulness in the public service.³⁹

Because the Government openly refused to support him in the care of its prisoners and the Synnotts labelled him a "malicious and practised slanderer", Hall was now far less popular, a situation which accentuated his difficult position as the District Assistant Surgeon whose lot was not a happy one at the best of times. Appointed at a small salary (£100.7.6 per annum) to carry out certain specified duties, mainly the care of all prisoners in the area, he was both permitted and expected to engage in private practice where possible, both to supply the need of the area for medical care and to augment his own income, provided such practice did not interfere with his official duties. In reality, the private practice was essential, especially if there was a large family for the doctor to support. Often the surgeon found himself on the horns of a dilemma.

³⁹ Colonial Times Oct. 12, 1841.
March 22, 29, 1842.

Strict allegiance to and the conscientious performance of his official duties as required by the regulations often meant the arousal of conflict between public and private interests. To care for an assigned servant properly, to say nothing of asking for the required payment, was to invoke the hostility and anger of the master.

Hall, who took his official duties seriously, acting strictly and independently, did not stop to consider whether his actions were agreeable to the Police authorities or helpful to his own private interests. Angered by his refusal to consider their position more important than a prisoner's, some Bothwellans, who lacked true understanding of the situation or bore a personal grudge against Hall, found other means to satisfy their medical needs, namely unqualified persons only too ready to engage in irregular practice - people like Wigmore, the Prisoner Dispenser, Robinson, and others. More serious still was the encroachment of another surgeon, D.E. Stodart, from the Green Ponds area. Stodart, the son of an old and well respected colonist, after completing his medical studies in England, arrived in Launceston in the ship "Wave" in early September 1840. Returning to Hobart Town, he established a medical practice at 62 Macquarie Street in November 1840, advertising himself particularly as an accoucheur.⁴⁰ His arrival was welcomed in the colony as there appeared to be a shortage of doctors owing to the death of some and the departure of others to the mainland.

However, Stodart found, like many others before him, that there were too many practising in Hobart Town already for him to make a living. He sought employment with the Government Medical Staff which appointed him to the Green Ponds district. There, too, he found things financially difficult, and was prepared to travel long distances to attend private patients in areas not his own, sometimes doing so to the neglect of patients in his own district. As even Hall's worst enemies could never accuse him of neglect, want of capacity, or any professional impropriety, the engagement by some Bothwell residents of Stodart to attend them was an act of pure spite and hostility against him. For some time Hall endured the situation, extremely reluctant to seek the protection of the Principal Medical Officer against a fellow surgeon. But when Stodart was summoned eighteen miles to attend Barrow's wife in her accouchment, almost on Hall's doorstep, he felt that the situation had become

⁴⁰ Colonial Times, Sept. 15, Nov. 17, 1840.

intolerable. Moreover, his financial resources were now so straitened by the curtailment of his private practice that he found it difficult to provide for his growing family, and requested a transfer which he was promised. In the meantime, on June 1, 1843, he asked for protection from Clarke, ascribing his dedication to the public interest as the cause of the private persecution being meted out to him. Stodart was accordingly rebuked the next day.

It has lately come to my knowledge that you extend your private practice beyond the limits of your district and where the services of a medical officer can be obtained on the spot. You receive the pay of a Probation Assistant Surgeon which is higher than that of a District one. As it is expected the former class will confine themselves very much to their Public Duties - if these can be performed correctly, I have no objection to Private Practice - but so long as I have charge of the Colonial Medical Department, I shall not allow a Probation Assistant Surgeon leaving the Public Duties of his own station for the purpose of private practice in that of another already provided with a qualified medical gentleman.⁴¹

But no interdict of Clarke's was able to quell the disturbance raging in Bothwell. Hall's enemies were vehement in their determination that, if they were not allowed to employ Stodart, they would not engage Hall either. They protested that Clarke's order was illegal, arbitrary and unjust, and provided Stodart did not interfere with the convicts in Government employment who were Hall's responsibility, the Principal Medical Officer had no power to prevent them engaging any doctor they wished. They were supported in their attitude by an article in the Colonial Times, thought by Hall to have been written by Robinson, which declared that Clarke had no authority to force Hall or any other medical practitioner down their throats, nor, acting in this "Algerine or Pasha-like style" to create a medical monopoly.⁴² Headed by Barrow, whose wife had been deprived of Stodart's medical care during her confinement, twenty one persons signed a petition taken round by the Chief Constable Redmond to have Hall removed from the district. Directed on June 10, 1843, to Colonial Secretary J.E. Bicheno, the petition read

We, the undersigned inhabitants of the District of Bothwell, request you will be good enough to lay before His Excellency, the Lieutenant Governor, the great hardship and inconvenience

⁴¹ C.S.O. 22/80/1743.

⁴² Colonial Times, June 27, 1843.

we at present experience from the fact of the Principal Medical Officer having prohibited any other District Assistant Surgeon from practising in private families in this district.

We desire most respectfully to represent to His Excellency that the present District Assistant Surgeon (Mr E.S. Hall) has rendered himself so extremely obnoxious to us as to preclude the possibility of our admitting him with the slightest degree of confidence into our families. We are therefore entirely deprived of all medical attendance, it being in the power of few to obtain such aid from Hobart Town. Therefore, we feel confident that His Excellency will afford us some relief, which relief we desire most respectfully to observe can only be effectually obtained by the removal of Mr E.S. Hall to another district.

When Hall discovered that three men, Philip and William Russell of Denniston and Horne, whom he had always regarded as his friends, had signed the petition and that their names were being used as an inducement to others to sign, he was grievously distressed and wrote to each of them to seek the reason for their action. His letter to the Russells revealed the shock, sorrow and uncertainty which he felt.

Bothwell,
17th June, 1843.

Gentlemen,

I feel much pained to find your names have been attached to a Petition praying for my removal from my appointment on the grounds of want of confidence in my professional abilities, etc. etc. As I am utterly unconscious of ever having given either of you the slightest grounds for such an opinion (the extent of my professional services to Mr William Russell having been the extraction of a tooth) I think there must be some mistake in the matter. I am naturally extremely jealous of the slightest aspersion on my professional acquirements and conduct, and therefore will feel extremely obliged if you will favour me with your reasons for subscribing to a document so calculated to wound my professional reputation - such conduct on the part of my open and avowed enemies can easily be understood, but not so on the part of those whom I have ever hitherto deemed friends - I can easily conceive you may think the change prayed for desirable on other grounds and I assure you I shall not feel annoyed at your expressing them - I did myself express to you some time ago that fact that I had applied for and was promised a removal - the interests of my young and helpless family demands from me the strictest vigilance in guarding my professional character from attacks from any quarter.

Both Philip Russell and Horne denied any intention of reflecting on Hall's professional skill or conduct, stating they had signed the petition to show their disapproval of an arbitrary act by Clarke. Russell's reply, which Hall summed up as "candid and explicit", was a little brutal:

This petition did not reflect on your professional character and in my opinion could not injure you in any way except by showing that you are at variance with a considerable portion of the inhabitants of this District which I believe is very generally known. It certainly went on to state, that owing to your being on such bad terms with the people generally, the only effectual mode of remedying the evil would be by removing you to another district which I was aware was your wish, and in my opinion would be advantageous to your interests as well as those of your family

In answer, Hall naturally wished to know if he had ever been at variance with Russell. Horne, who had once stated that if there were fifty medical men present he would employ Hall, was a little more sensitive in his attitude, going out of his way to make his opinion clear:

.... My reason as stated to you was simply on the principle that I conceived it extremely arbitrary on the part of Dr Clarke prohibiting Mr Stodart from completing his medical attendance on Mrs Barrow who had lately been confined; that gentleman having been made choice of by Mr Barrow as his professional attendant in preference to yourself. I do not concur in any other part of the Petition having always had and still continue to feel every confidence in your ability

On June 29, angered by an article concerning himself and Stodart which was published in the Colonial Times on June 27, Hall decided to forestall any action by the Government by forwarding a copy of it to Clarke and his own version of the affair. Barrow, he said, had induced Horne to sign the petition by showing him Stodart's letter in which he attacked Clarke's decree; at the time the only names attached were Barrow, Synnott, Wigmore and the Russells; this letter had been used subsequently to induce others to sign also. Hall denied Philip Russell's statement that he was "at variance" with the people generally; the only persons with whom he was "at variance" were Barrow, Wigmore and Synnott for reasons known to everybody. In words which any District Assistant Surgeon might have used he went on to describe the others who signed it.

.... Many others there are who feel it a very great offence that I should not allow them to dictate what they think a sufficient remuneration for my services - others who think I ought not to make any charge at all - others who think I ought not to call attention to their cruel neglect medically of their assigned servants - others again that I ought to submit in my dealings with them as shopkeepers (to the amount of £100 a year) to impositions of upwards of 100% - another that I had no right to refuse the loan of my gig to his servant and many others equally consistent

He challenged any person whose signature was on the petition to prove that he had ever let his personal feelings prevent him from carrying out his professional duties, day or night, in good or bad weather, or that

they had any cause to complain of his treatment, attention, absence from his post or his unfitness for duty, as they had done with previous doctors. He drew attention to the fact of Mrs Learmouth who had died without medical assistance while Stodart was visiting Mrs Barrow in Bothwell some time before her confinement. Indignantly, he claimed it monstrous that the Police Authorities should be party to or the originators of an attack against a Public Officer and that private settlers should attempt to dictate policy to the Medical Department.

.... It would appear that the Public think that the medical appointments are made for them

He concluded rather ironically

.... I feel very indignant at this proceeding altogether - I little desire it at the hands of the public, yet after all I know not whether I ought not to be highly proud, that after four years' residence here, with some as untiring enemies as ever sought injury to any man, they can urge nothing worse against me than I am not on 'hail-fellow-well-met' terms with several of them.

Once again he asked for a transfer.

When asked for his opinion of the petition, Clarke, who was both nervous of his own conduct in the dispute and unsure of the Governor's approval, replied tactfully that there was no Medical Officer in the Department whose interests he wished to consult and advance more than Stodart's. When he was appointed to Green Ponds, because of the extent of his duties, Stodart was recommended for the salary of a Probation Assistant Surgeon plus an allowance for a horse, with permission to engage in private practice in his own district. This should have been enough to satisfy him. It was most unwise to allow him to practise beyond his own district in case of an accident or a sudden illness since the Public and the Government would be the first to blame the Medical Department for allowing it. Clarke emphasized that Probation Assistant Surgeons were not paid to attend country gentlemen and their families but to care for assigned servants and prisoners in Government employment, a fact of which the Bothwell petitioners seemed to be completely ignorant. The action of Barrow, who took a leading part in ostracizing Hall, a Public Officer, was neither necessary nor correct. Rather it was his duty to reconcile differences, not to create them. If Hall were guilty of the charges made, it was the Magistrate's official duty to investigate them in the proper manner. The accusations against Hall were unexpected and unwarranted, but as they had been made, it was necessary for him to prove his innocence if he were to remain in the Government service.

Clarke regretted delaying for so long Hall's transfer which was being arranged, as then the incident with its irritating consequences to the Government would not have occurred.

The petitioners received their answer on July 21, 1843. The Governor fully agreed with Clarke's action in restricting Stodart's private practice to his own district and bluntly told the petitioners so:

.... In order to preserve any control over the medical assistance to be afforded to the convicts, for which duty District Assistant Surgeons are specially appointed, it is necessary that their private practice should to a certain extent be limited, for were not some such rule established, the advantage of the Public Service might in many instances be sacrificed to private emoluments.

However, as Hall's usefulness as a Public Officer was impaired by the strong objections raised against his remaining in Bothwell, Franklin consented to his transfer to another district; but at the same time he made it quite clear that the removal was not due to any lack of confidence in the surgeon's skill, or that the slightest reflection had been cast on his reputation as a professional man.⁴³ At Franklin's own expressed wish, an exchange of districts took place between Hall at Bothwell and Dr Hazlett at Westbury. Unfortunately, the Commissariat of Accounts was not informed also and both doctors were forced to wait a long time for the first payment of their salaries in their new appointments.⁴⁴

⁴³ CSO 22/80/1743.

⁴⁴ CSO 22/89/1888.

WESTBURY

Sadly leaving a tiny grave behind them Edward Swarbreck, Mary and their four small daughters, Mary Jane, Alicia, Josephine and Victoria, set out from Bothwell in the late winter of 1843. Already flowering trees in the settlers' gardens were covered with pink and white blossom and yellow wattles in the bush were breaking into bloom. The journey through the wind, still biting cold from snow deep on the mountain peaks, was long and slow; over the difficult Den Hill to the Cross Marsh, northwards along the main highway to Launceston, and thence south westwards for twenty two miles to Westbury. Possibly Hall drove the family in his gig with their possessions following behind in horse or bullock-drawn carts, or Mary and the children travelled by the faster stage coach.

Westbury, unlike Bothwell, was a small settlement lying in the midst of open, gently-undulating country on the plainlands separating the central mountain area from the sea. It was fertile land, heavily forested, softer to the eye and milder in climate, its cold tempered by winds from the sea. In 1843 the number of free settlers in the district was insufficient to support a medical man without the assistance of a Government salary¹, but it was increasing as more land was cleared. Bridges, roads and a sufficient supply of labour were especially needed.

Some time prior to Hall's appointment the residents, in an effort to get their roads and bridges built by prisoner labour, erected buildings to accommodate a road gang in accordance with the Government's policy. The wooden buildings enclosed by a high paling fence were only temporary, but as time went on they were extended by the Convict Department which established a male hiring depot housing three to four hundred prisoners who were engaged in clearing land and agriculture when not contracted out for service. In May 1847, at the time of La Trobe's visit, there were three hundred and thirty four prisoners; one hundred and eight acres were under cultivation; fifty more were ready for use and fifty more being cleared.² The station was considered ideal for agriculture and well suited to passholders whose labour was much in demand.

¹ Courier, Dec. 10, 1841.

² G.O. 33/60 p. 1656.

Hall's main duty was to care for these prisoners. Financially his position was greatly improved: whereas in Bothwell he received 3/- per day plus quarters and forage allowance for one horse, in Westbury, as Colonial Assistant Surgeon he received 7/6 per day plus quarters and forage allowance. When he commenced duty on August 19, 1843, he found that his arrival and Hazlett's departure were equally welcomed by the settlers, who for several years past had disliked their surgeon as a man not always in a fit condition to carry out his medical duties properly.³ Hall remained in the district until November 16, 1847, and if lack of complaint to the Government or in the press is any basis for judgment, he found no disfavour with the residents.

At the end of 1843 a son was born, named Latham after Mary's maiden name, but the child lived only eighteen months and died in mid-June 1845 from unspecified causes. However, on September 29, 1846, another son, Leventhorpe Michael, was born and survived.⁴

After nine months Hall's official duties were extended on June 1, 1844, to cover the convict establishment at Deloraine. This entitled him to a further increase in salary at the rate of 10/- per day plus quarters and forage allowance.⁵ Twice weekly he drove beyond Westbury for ten miles to the Punishment Station established on the Meander, a branch of the South Esk Western River. The wooden buildings which were situated too close to the river to be healthy were mostly erected by the settlers to house a gang engaged in constructing a road five miles from Deloraine towards Westbury, a bridge, and a road five miles to the West. The fourteen sleeping huts, ill-ventilated and insecure, were regarded as sufficient accommodation for three hundred and sixty eight men, but when that many were present they were badly overcrowded; some were paved with wooden logs four to eight feet deep, as were the three mess rooms, one of which was so badly constructed that it let in the rain. Also there were some solitary cells, a small store, a bake house, three muster yards separated by a high wall of logs, a wooden chapel, a superintendent's cottage and quarters for the other officials which, like the similar buildings at Westbury, were very poor.⁶

³ Colonial Times, Oct. 26, 1841.
Courier, Dec. 10, 1841.

⁴ Hall Papers, NS 308/1/3.

⁵ C.S.O. 22/142/3014.

⁶ G.O. 33/60 p. 1630.

Around the station the land was heavily timbered, but as the soil was good some had been cleared for agriculture. In 1847 there were sixteen acres sown in wheat and seven and a half in potatoes yielding a good return. At that time there were one hundred and thirty eight prisoners, thirty of whom were constructing the road three miles towards Westbury whilst the rest completed the bridge over the Meander River under the supervision of an overseer paid by the settlers, who were also responsible for the cost of iron and cartage. As yet nothing had been done on the road from Deloraine to the West, for the Government had decided to break the station up as soon as the bridge and the road to Westbury were completed, there being better places for concentrating prisoners where good building stone was plentiful and the land more suited to cultivation. The two stations under Hall's medical care were a marked contrast in management: Deloraine was considered by the Comptroller-General to be one of the best-managed in the state, whilst Westbury was one of the worst.⁷ In Nine Years in Van Diemen's Land Syme agreed:

At Westbury there is a hiring depot of Crown prisoners who have served their periods of probation, or second or further punishments. This party is exercised likewise in making roads and clearing land, but these are notoriously and perversely inclined to idleness. A further notice of the gross mismanagement in waste and misappropriation of labour, the reprehensible laxity of all discipline, the unproductiveness of this gang and inefficient superintendence, accompanied with the occasional out-breakings of this depot will be hereafter submitted in my account of Probationism as a sample of the general administration of this notoriously mal-administered and morally destructive system to which these felons are unhappily subjected to in the oversight of persons in too many instances utterly incompetent for such a task.⁸

In contrast to Bothwell, Hall's time in Westbury and Deloraine was quiet; probably he was preoccupied with convict duties and the care of the hospital at Westbury. As a result of a rumour that prisoners were practising widespread homosexuality, Colonial Assistant Surgeons were instructed to examine prisoners regularly to detect any signs of "unnatural crime". Once a month, or more frequently, Hall inspected each man in the nude, but like other surgeons, with one exception, he found no basis for the rumour. On October 22, 1847, he wrote

In reply to your circular of the 19th instant, I am happy to inform you, that anxiously as I have directed my attention to this painful subject, I have found no sign⁹

⁷ G.O. 33/60 p. 1656.

⁸ J. Syme, Nine Years in Van Diemen's Land, p. 40.

⁹ G.O. 33/60 p. 1847.

Apparently he contacted the Colonial Secretary once on July 14, 1845, to complain of the violation of the Medical Witnesses' Act by Longford's Coroner, Charles Arthur, who failed to summon him to give evidence at an inquest. He asked that the fee of three guineas legally due to him be paid to the newly formed Benevolent Society in Launceston. However, in spite of Hall's denial of impetuosity, the Coroner and the Governor accused him of overhastiness in not waiting for an explanation and the case was dismissed.¹⁰

In Westbury, too, Hall assumed leadership of the Roman Catholic community. As the only three Catholic churches in Van Diemen's Land were at Hobart Town, Launceston and Richmond, Hall prepared a large hospital ward where once a month Father A. Cotham from Launceston celebrated Mass; on the other three Sundays Hall read prayers and sermons himself, occasionally officiating at burials also. After Cotham's departure from Van Diemen's Land, while Father T. Butler was in charge, a superintendent at the Hiring Depot complained to the Comptroller-General about Hall's use of a hospital ward for services, but he was soundly reproved and ordered to forward his correspondence to Hall for his perusal, whilst Hall himself was warmly commended for his efforts to bring the Catholic community together. Moreover, he was visited by the first Catholic Bishop in Australia, the Most Rev. John Bede Polding of Sydney, accompanied by Bishop R. Willson of Hobart Town, who discussed with him a proposal for the establishment of another church in Van Diemen's Land. When Hall left the district in 1847, the way was well prepared for Father Hogan who remained in Westbury for many years.¹¹ Together with thirteen others in various districts Hall was appointed in April 1845 to collect subscriptions to a fund for the establishment of a small community of Sisters of Charity in Hobart Town.¹² Many years later, on January 14, 1875, the Hall family cemented their link with the Sisters of Charity, when the eldest daughter, Mary Jane, joined the order as Sister Mary Agnes.

Although Hall was less disturbed by personal conflict in the Deloraine-Westbury period, this lack of hostility was certainly not typical of the public scene, especially in areas less isolated and closer

¹⁰ C.S.O. 22/142/3014.

¹¹ E.S. Hall, "Reminiscences", Catholic Standard, May 1879.

¹² Colonial Times, April 12, 1845.

to the seat of government where opposition to the Probation System was strong. In spite of continual adverse criticism by the press and the colonists, the policy was implemented under the guidance of a specially appointed new Governor, Sir John Eardley Wilmot, who succeeded Franklin on August 21, 1843, two days after Hall began work in Westbury.

Louisa Meredith, in My Home in Tasmania described Sir John as "kind-hearted, witty and generous",

Candid and open hearted, perhaps even to a fault, in this world of hypocrisy, highly refined and witty himself, and keenly appreciating wit and intelligence in those around him, Sir Eardley Wilmot rarely took prudent pains to disguise his feelings of indifference towards the dull, the pompous or the vulgar, and consequently created some mortal foes, who, aided by the ready credulity of a puritannical minister, aimed but too surely the assassins' blow at his honour and peace of mind.¹³

Whether Wilmot's personal qualities were suited to the appointment or not, he was given the immense task of developing a huge scheme of penal discipline which sounded well in theory to its creators, but proved impossible to its administrators. As ship load after ship load of convicts continued to arrive, temporary buildings were hurriedly erected, each adding to the number of stations already with inadequate accommodation. On May 6, 1847, Comptroller-General of Convicts, Dr J. Hampton, who had succeeded to that position six months before after the death of Forster, stated that not one station in Van Diemen's Land was completed.¹⁴ As with the buildings, so it was with the staff. In an effort to meet the enormous costs lower salaries were paid, thus creating an inferior class of officer. With such a poor staff, Hampton thought it fortunate that more serious evils had not arisen. As it was, the probation camps did little to help prisoners but rather more to increase their degradation and suffering by herding them together in large numbers which included every type of personality. There was neither reformation, dignity nor hope, and certainly not diligence, according to Meredith who described some of the prisoners in her book Over the Straits.

At Maria Island, the Rocky Hills, and other so called 'probation stations' (though in what the probation consisted except in increasing idleness and crime, it were hard to say) the prisoners were used in tens and twenties, attached to ploughs, harrows and light carts, with two or three to each common wheelbarrow for the purpose of cultivating land, and

¹³ L.A. Meredith, My Home in Tasmania (London, 1852) Vol. 2, p. 202-4.

¹⁴ G.O. 46 Vol. 1.

growing grain, potatoes, turnips etc., feeding pigs, and in fact farming; the Government doing the hucksters-shop part of the business and selling the articles in competition with the then wretchedly low-priced produce of the oppressed and tax ground free settlers, to whom the labour of the gangs by day was thus made a curse instead of a benefit; and by night they were robbed equally, but undisguisedly; and occasionally murdered too, by the ill-guarded desperadoes, who made forays round the neighbourhoods of these probation dens. Add to which, they were pillaged by enormous taxes for the maintenance of a large police force to keep the prisoners in check.¹⁵

No matter what Hall's private opinions were, his livelihood depended on the system and he was in no position to criticize. But his settler friends were loud in their protests as Westbury and Deloraine stations were regarded as particularly uneconomic to the Government: during 1845 the value of all the articles produced by the convicts amounted to £709.7.5; in the same period the officers' salaries were £1,554.2.3, leaving a deficit of £784.14.7, exclusive of the expenses of tools and stores used in the repair of the buildings.

The utter idleness of the entire swarm at many of the Probation Stations was notorious.¹⁶

commented Meredith.

Faced with a mounting financial burden, a growing number of free men unable to find work which was monopolized by the probationers, increasing hostility from the settlers, and a steady realization that the system would not work, the British Government found a scape goat in Wilmot and removed him from office. Charles Joseph Latrobe, Superintendent of the Port Philip District and later the first Governor of Victoria, was appointed "Administrator" on October 13, 1846, with instructions to examine the Probation Department carefully and minutely. As a result many inefficient officers were dismissed and changes proposed in the system. Three months later on January 26, 1847, a new Governor, Sir William Denison, Knight, Captain of the Royal Engineers, arrived to put the recommended changes into effect. On January 10, 1849, the Comptroller-General in his report to the Governor wrote:

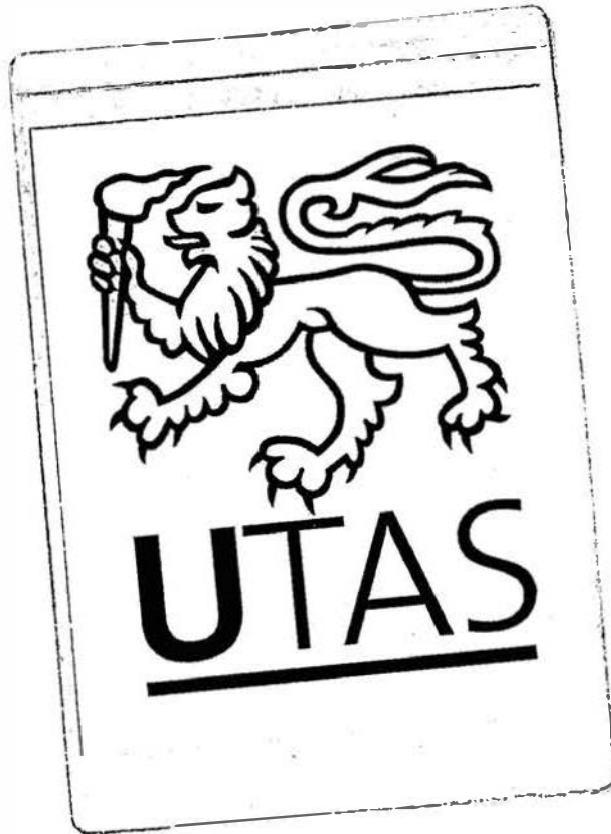
When I entered on the discharge of my present duties in October, 1846, there were 39 male Convict Stations and establishments in Van Diemen's Land and 11,930 male convicts maintained by Government, of whom 3,073 were eligible for

¹⁵ L.A. Meredith, Over the Straits (London, 1861), p. 7.

¹⁶ Ibid. p. 10.

private service. On the 31st December, 1848; the stations were reduced to twenty-one containing 5,809 maintained by Government, only 1,091 of these being passholders awaiting hire.

Amongst the stations broken up were Westbury and Deloraine, which were considered "imperfect, detached and expensive".¹⁷ Consequently, on November 17, 1847, Hall was transferred to Jerusalem.



¹⁷ G.O. 46 Vol. 1, Report of the Comptroller-General January 10, 1849.

JERUSALEM

Hall's third country appointment, Jerusalem, later known as Colebrook, was a small agricultural and pastoral settlement in the Richmond district, thirty-nine miles from Hobart Town and ninety-three from Launceston. The centre for an area of rich farmland encircled by mountainous country, it was situated in the midlands of the island and was far less isolated than Westbury: thirteen miles to the north lay Jericho, twelve miles to the west Green Ponds, both on the highway connecting Hobart Town and Launceston. Here, at Jerusalem, the Convict Department had established a hiring depot for passholders who were employed in clearing land and agriculture when not under hire. In 1847 one hundred and eighty-four acres were under cultivation, yielding a good return. Included in the buildings, which unlike most stations were very good, was a hospital, in one ward of which Hall and fellow Roman Catholics celebrated Mass on Father Dunne's periodic visits from Richmond. However, Hall remained at Jerusalem only a short time from November 17, 1847, to May 12, 1848, as this station, too, was broken up about April 30, 1848, as a result of Hampton's efforts to achieve consolidation, efficiency and economy.

OATLANDS

From Jerusalem Hall transferred to Oatlands, a small township on the banks of Lake Dulverton on the main north-south highway, fifty-two miles from Hobart Town and sixty-eight from Launceston. Although it had the dubious distinction of being the most elevated township in Van Diemen's Land, one thousand three hundred and thirty-seven feet above sea level with correspondingly very cold winters, it was, nonetheless, described by the Colonial Times in 1840 as a "pleasant township progressing fast towards prosperity".¹ From May 13, 1848, until January 31, 1850, Hall was in medical charge of the road station at Oatlands and the probation camp at Jericho, some miles to the south on the main highway. His salary, both in Jerusalem and Oatlands, remained the same as in Westbury, 10/- per day, but in Oatlands he received an extra 2/6 per day contingent. Both in Jerusalem and Oatlands no quarters were provided by the Medical Department but £50 per annum lodging money was allowed instead. The appointment to Oatlands pleased Mary who was able to rent a house of her own choosing instead of living in quarters provided by the Ordnance Department. The pleasure she received from the new arrangements was revealed in a letter she received from her brother, Austin Latham, from Antwerp, dated August 10, 1849:

We were all much rejoiced to hear of Mr Edward's new appointment and above all that you were so comfortably situated with regard to domestic arrangements.²

It is not known, however, where in Oatlands they lived.

Hall's time at Oatlands and Jericho was not without incident. Here, as elsewhere, he frequently conflicted with both the free settlers on the one hand and the prisoners on the other, when he attempted to perform his duties in accordance with the regulations and his own principles. As Medical Officer he supervised the purchase of food for the convicts to ensure that the quality laid down by Commissariat regulations was maintained. Time and again he found that contractors, who were often amongst the wealthiest and most influential of the population and sometimes his social friends, were supplying food of such an inferior quality that he would not eat it himself. In attempting to see justice done to the convicts, he aroused enmity towards himself. Similarly, he incurred the

¹ Colonial Times, Oct. 27, 1840.

² Hall Papers, NS 308/2/20.

anger and resentment of the prisoners by not allowing them to "malingering", The Jericho camp was particularly notorious for the violent character of some of its inmates. On one of his visits to Oatlands Willson warned Hall that some of its worst criminals were plotting his murder. The warning was timely; a short time after Hall was struck to the ground at the entrance to the Oatlands Police Court by a large piece of road metal hurled at him by a "burly ruffian" whom he had accused of "malingering". The bones of the upper part of his nose were smashed and a great amount of blood lost. His assailant was later examined by another doctor, who confirmed Hall's opinion of "malingering", and sentenced to Norfolk Island.³

Fortunately, there were more pleasant sides to the Halls' life; for instance they made friends with a young, intelligent and attractive Irishman, Kevin O'Doherty, who came to live at "Elm Cottage", the home of John Ryan. O'Doherty was one of seven young, political prisoners exiled to Van Diemen's Land for leading the "Young Ireland Party" in 1848 in its effort to regain an Irish parliament. Each prisoner on arrival in 1849, with the exception of Smith O'Brien, was given a Ticket-of-Leave on Parole and assigned a separate district in which to reside. O'Doherty, a gentle, kindly man, was sent to Oatlands where he became a great favourite with the townspeople. He and Hall had much in common in spite of their difference in age, for both men had been medical students in Dublin. As O'Doherty had not finished his course before he was transported, Hall assisted him to continue his studies.⁴

During the twenty months they lived in Oatlands, the Halls worked hard again to foster the Roman Catholic community. Vera Fisher in Linking Oatlands With mentioned that Edward and Mary were directly descended from English martyrs and that he brought to Oatlands the crucifix worn by his relative Father Edward Oldcorne, at his execution on April 7, 1606. Perhaps Hall brought with him also the energy, enthusiasm and faith which inspired his ancestors several centuries before, for much was achieved in the short time he resided in the township.

When the family moved to Oatlands, Father W. Dunne from Richmond celebrated Mass in the Police Court or at Hall's house in which there was a "large and most conveniently adapted drawing room". When Dunne was moved from Richmond, his place was taken temporarily by Father A. Macguire

³ Reply to Testimonial, Mercury, June 9, 1881.

⁴ O'Meagher Papers, NS 23/5.

who assisted Hall to put into action the plan for a new Catholic Church which was discussed in Westbury by Polding and Willson. The two men canvassed the Oatlands district within a range of ten miles for signatures to a memorial requesting Denison to appoint a Chaplain to Oatlands and to build a church in accordance with the Church Act. The memorial, accompanied by a list of names of bona fide Catholics who resided within ten miles of Oatlands, was immediately forwarded to Willson, but for some reason or other the Bishop did not send the necessary documents to the Governor until after the Church Act expired. Consequently the Catholics were faced with meeting the cost of the project themselves if they wished to continue with their plans. At this stage Maguire was transferred to Port Arthur to take the place of Father W.P. Bond who had been severely ill. Bond, in his turn, was appointed chaplain to the probation stations on the high road at Spring Hill, Jericho and St. Peter's Pass. He continued to celebrate Mass every Sunday in the Police Court and on holidays and other occasions in Hall's drawing room.⁵ As the appeal to the Governor had been unsuccessful, Hall and Bond arranged a public meeting of the congregation on April 8, 1849, to discuss what should be done. Hall took a prominent part at the meeting:

At a public meeting of the Subscribers to the Fund for the erection of a Catholic Church at Oatlands held in the Court House at Oatlands on the 8th April 1849, it was moved by Dr Hall, seconded by Dr Macramara and resolved that the Revd. W.P. Bond do take the chair.

Moved by Dr Hall, seconded by Mr Daniel O'Connor and resolved that Mr W. Cahill be requested to act as secretary.

Later moved by Dr Hall and seconded by A. Thompson "That the following gentlemen do constitute a committee of management for everything that is necessary in the erection of a Catholic Church at Oatlands, three to form a quorum.

The Bishop of Hobart Town.
 Revd. W.P. Bond, or the resident priest
 of Oatlands for the time being.
 H.T. Anstey
 D. O'Connor
 W.J. Bacon
 J. Ryan
 E. White
 W. Cahill
 E.S. Hall

On April 23, 1849, Willson wrote to the Colonial Secretary

Hobarton
23rd April 1849

Sir,

I have the honour to request that His Excellency the Lieutenant-Governor will be so kind as to direct that land for the site of a Catholic Church, Ministers' dwelling and school with playground for children in the township of Oatlands may be set apart. I would also respectfully request that it may be the piece of ground marked in the plan "Reserve" bounded by William St., Gay St. and Dulverton St.

I have the honor
to be your Obedient servant,

Robt. Wm. Willson,
Catholic Bishop of Hob.

The land was granted on April 28. The subscription list, too, was steadily filling: Willson, £50; Henry Anstey and his father, £150; Hall and his wife, who collected much of the money £20. There were many others who contributed generously, some who were not members of the congregation; some who were not even Catholics. Hall, who was Acting Treasurer in lieu of Willson, was delighted at the response.

On May 24, 1849, a Building Committee and a Committee for the Management of a Pastor's Fund were set up; on December 9 plans and specifications submitted by Architect F. Thomas were accepted; when tenders were called, Stewarts for £489, less £25 for value of stone provided by the Government was accepted on February 24, 1850. Although Hall was transferred to Ross on February 1, he retained his position as Acting Treasurer and five weeks later, on April 9, took his family to Oatlands to see the laying of the Foundation Stone. Bond, too, was transferred to Ross at the end of May. Well pleased at the progress of the chapel his congregation presented him with an Address. However, that much of the credit was due to Hall's efforts, Bond would have been the first to admit. Bond's place was taken by Father M. Keohan who was present for the first time at a meeting of the Building Committee on June 16, 1850. It was his task to watch over the completion of the chapel and later the building of the manse. Many years after, Hall wrote proudly:

Before the chapel was opened the contractor was paid every farthing of the amount by me, the treasurer.

Although the chapel collapsed on Tuesday, July 30, 1850, and killed a workman named Flanagan, building was commenced again and eventually St. Paul's Church was opened for worship on February 26, 1851.⁶



⁶ Courier, August 3, 1850.

For the story of St. Paul's, Oatlands.

Hall Papers NS 308/2/17.

Reminiscences, Catholic Standard, May 1879.

Mercury, May 15, 22, 1876.

ROSS

Early in 1850, on the breaking up of the Oatlands and Jericho stations, Hampton offered Hall the conjoint appointment of Superintendent and Medical Officer of all the convict establishments at Ross. By this time Hall's reputation as a capable, reliable and trustworthy public officer was firmly established and he was warmly recommended for the position by Principal Medical Officer Dr Dawson. As the appointment was responsible and onerous, Hall, in accepting, candidly told the Comptroller-General that, if the time ever arose when he felt he could not execute the duties of the office with satisfaction either to him (Hampton) or to himself, he would promptly resign. On February 1, 1850, he began his duties at Ross with an increased salary and greatly increased responsibilities some of which were different from those to which he was accustomed in Van Diemen's Land.

Twenty-two miles to the north of Oatlands, Ross was a small town built on the banks of the Macquarie River where it intersected the main north-south road at a point some seventy-five miles from Hobart Town and forty-nine from Launceston. The suitability of the site for a town had first impressed Governor Macquarie on his journey across the island in 1811; the following year a small military garrison was posted there to protect travellers, and in 1821 on Macquarie's second visit the designated town was named Ross. Gradually it became a centre for the pastoral industry which flourished in the extensive fertile plains and a Government farm was established there for some time. During the Probation System period the Convict Department built a punishment station and a hiring depot, using the local stone which was very good.

There were five well-ventilated and fairly secure wards sufficient to accommodate about two hundred and twenty men, the largest ward housing seventy men when full; and two yards separated by a wooden partition, one for the prisoners in chains and one for the passholders. Water for drinking and washing was obtained from the river two hundred yards away, and water for laundry purposes from two wells. There were two excellent stone troughs where the prisoners washed. The men in chains were employed on the main road whilst the passholders, when not under hire for which there was a good demand, were engaged in preparing stone, sawing wood for the rebuilding of the church and the erection of a military barracks. In May, 1847, sixty acres of vegetables were under cultivation. In Ross, too, there was a good watch house strongly built

of stone with a very high wall and secure yards. As there was no lock-up or solitary cells at the convict station, those sentenced to solitary confinement were sent to the watch-house, which served as a gaol, where they were kept in lofty well-ventilated cells under the charge of constables; those sentenced to gaol but not solitary confinement were kept in small, strongly-built rooms in an upper storey. Also in the gaol were two large wards and a separate yard reserved for female convicts. The punishment station also included a small, confined hospital.

When Hampton assumed control of the Convict Department in October 1846 and began the formidable task of reorganizing the Probation System to achieve greater efficiency, he found one of the most urgent problems requiring solution to be that of female passholders. Settlers in the interior of the island were required to send either to Hobart Town or Launceston to hire these women. In Hobart Town they were lodged on the ship "Anson" which was unsuitable as a probation station. Subsequently, if the women committed further offences while under hire, which was too often the case, they were marched off again across the country to Hobart Town or Launceston under the custody of escort constables who generally were or had been convicts themselves. Such arrangements frequently led to unnecessary immorality with consequent expense and inconvenience to the Government. Hampton, therefore, decided to establish a punishment station and hiring depot for female convicts in the interior and chose the convict establishments at Ross as a suitable place:

The want of an establishment for female convicts in the interior of the island has in a variety of ways for years produced not only great inconvenience but caused grievous irregularities which will in future be prevented by the recent opening of a Female House of Correction at Ross. The Central Depot will afford peculiar facilities for transferring female convicts to and from private service and women, long resident in Hobart Town and Launceston, who have formed numerous vicious associations in these towns, can now be forced to remain in the penal districts in circumstances of less temptation and with strong incentives to well-doing.¹

Ross was very suitable, as it was centrally located in the island in a healthy situation with a pure atmosphere ideally suited for a "lying-in" hospital. It also had a large vegetable garden already attached to the station. Extensive additions and alterations were begun; the yards were separated to allow better classification of prisoners; the rooms

¹ G.O. 46, Vol. 1, Report of the Comptroller-General, Jan. 10, 1849.

were floored and ceiled, the roofs resingled and a high boundary fence was erected to enclose the whole station. On December 31, 1848, there were 17 female passholders awaiting hire, 16 women under magisterial sentence, and 29 women in the nursery, a total of 62. In addition there were 42 children aged from 0-3 years, 20 boys and 22 girls, making a total of 104 persons. Hampton was well pleased with the new establishment, both for the consequent reduction in irregular behaviour and for the decline in infant mortality brought about by the transfer of mothers from Launceston.

Hall's appointment on February 1, 1850, covered all the convict establishments at Ross: a female house of correction, including a hiring depot, lying-in hospital and nursery for children; a male sentence and hiring station, and a public male hospital. In addition he had medical charge of all the road stations between Ross and Oatlands. For the first time since leaving Liverpool in 1833 he was responsible for the care of a number of women and children. In that city he had been attached as Honorary Surgeon to a large institution where 40,000 to 50,000 patients, most of them children, were treated annually. There, too, for two years he was in medical charge of a female orphanage. The work at the Female House of Correction at Ross was in some respects, therefore, a return to the type of responsibility to which he had been accustomed in his early medical career. Always fond of children, he entered upon his new tasks with enthusiasm.

Of course, there were many problems. In spite of the recent improvements to the buildings, they were still not good. Hall later declared that the buildings at Ross were worse than those at the Cascades Female Factory in Hobart Town. Accommodation was very cramped. He particularly objected to the fact that nurses and children were forced to live in the same room day and night, and that the sleeping berths were arranged in two tiers one above the other. He asked that this be changed, but nothing was done. Nevertheless, both mothers and children prospered under his care, and he considered the health of the children was equal to that of children in private life. He later boasted:

I had many as fine specimens of children there as I ever saw in any part of the world. I used to be proud to show them.²

Female prisoners, he discovered, could be just as vicious as men and just as much a threat to his life; "Female furies", he called

² L.C. Journals, 1855, Vol. VI, Paper 32, p. 19.

them. One of these whose deception he had exposed, for he allowed no trick by man or woman to pass unnoticed, hid a heavy piece of quartering with which to kill him as he knelt with his ear to the chest of a woman dying of lung disease. Fortunately, the Assistant Superintendent was warned of her intention a moment before Hall made his rounds of the hospital and the attempt on his life was thwarted.

From February 1, 1850, until September 1852, Hall's management of the establishments proceeded smoothly. Hampton, with whom Hall's relationship was cordial, spoke of him "as one of his best officers - too valuable to be parted with". Dawson, on his departure to India, left Hall this testimonial -

Hobarton, 2nd April, 1852.

Dr Hall has been the medical officer of a general hospital at Oatlands, and subsequently the medical superintendent of the female factory and nursery of children at Ross. I have always esteemed him as a zealous, attentive and efficient officer, a well-educated medical man, and exercising his profession with judgment and discretion and success.

W. Dawson M.D.

Dep. Inspector-General of Hospitals

Dawson's successor, Dr Shanks, visited Ross once during Hall's charge and recorded:

Visited the station this day, found the inmates remarkably healthy and the whole establishment in the most perfect order.

He commended Hall for his management of a difficult task; so, too, did other visitors: clergymen, medical men, magistrates, ladies and high officials. One visitor, formerly of the Ordnance Tower of London "considered it (Ross factory) well deserving of being held up as a model for all similar establishments in Her Majesty's colonies".³

Though pleased with his success as a convict Medical Superintendent, Hall did not let anything take precedence over his domestic life. His family had now increased to six children, another daughter, Anastasia, having been born on August 29, 1850. To educate his growing family of five girls and one boy Hall employed a governess, Catherine Bennett, a daughter of Brian Bennett of Stoneley, Hayes, who was described as a charming and intelligent girl. One rainy afternoon in the early autumn of 1850 Hall was driving two of his children and their governess near "Somercotes" when a front wheel of the carriage slipped into a muddy rut and came off. Although the vehicle capsized

³ Tasmanian Daily News, Sept. 18, 1855.

and flung everyone into the mud and the governess fainted, no one was hurt. Fortunately, one of the Irish exiles, Thomas O'Meagher, who was living in Ross, strode along the road and joined in the rescue of the dishevelled party. O'Meagher, a tall, good-looking young man in his twenties and a friend of O'Doherty, became friendly with the Hall family too and later described the doctor:

No Protestant Bible movement was ever started in the colony but the worthy doctor, putting on his spectacles, followed on its track. A dozen letters, pointed and barbed with the deadliest texts, tough with passages from Jerome and Tertullian, and winged with the spirit of a Templar, went whizzing after the chairman and every other speaker on the occasion, through the columns of some highly independent journal. On Sundays he walked to Mass at the head of his numerous family with an illuminated volume of hymns and meditations bound in brass and brown velvet in one hand, and a black walking stick, embellished with the head of St. Dunstan in ivory in the other.⁴

On February 22, 1851, Catherine and O'Meagher were married by Willson in Hall's drawing room. It was a gay, happy affair, with the bridegroom resplendent in a green velvet coat with gold buttons. O'Meagher built a small stone cottage, "the fairy cottage", on the shore of Lake Sorell to which he took his bride, accompanied by Mary Jane who stayed for some time with them.

As always, religion played an important part in their life in Ross. For the first twelve months Hall continued to act as Treasurer to the Catholic Mission at Oatlands for the building of St. Paul's until its completion. Every two weeks Father Bond from Oatlands visited Ross to celebrate Mass for the female prisoners in one of the large wards, until the chapel, built for the joint use of Protestants and Catholics, was finished. Hall and his family attended Mass at the Ross Police Station together with the male prisoners, the soldiers, and the residents of the district.

As time passed, personal distress, anger and excitement, all affected the Hall household. Twice in one winter the Macquarie River overflowed its banks and flooded the house so that Hall was obliged to get men from the convict station to bale it out, a service to himself as a private citizen which he specially noted in his diary, a copy of which he sent to the Comptroller-General each week.

⁴ O'Meagher Papers, NS 23/5.

Once more in Ross, as in Brighton and Bothwell, he complained to the Colonial Secretary about the local police force which made little attempt to keep order in the town. Hall's residence was on the outskirts and he and his family of young girls were frequently annoyed by the bad behaviour of the worst characters in the district, both male and female, who congregated in a nearby hut. In spite of Hall's complaints to the Chief Constable, the local police participated in rather than dispelled their activities.

Although Hall's position as a salaried officer of the Government did not permit him to engage in political controversy, he, nevertheless, took an educated man's intelligent interest in the management of his country and held strong, considered opinions of his own concerning it. Certainly, he would have been less than human if he had not been affected by the excitement which pervaded the political arena of the colony in 1850-1851. The doubts and misgivings which assailed many of the colonists on the introduction of the Probation System into Van Diemen's Land in the early forties, had not been allayed by any visible results over the years, but rather increased and crystallized into open, direct opposition, in spite of Hampton's sincere and earnest efforts to improve the Convict Department. Many settlers felt that the island and they themselves deserved a better fate than continuing to be the rubbish tip for thousands of British criminals. With the formation of the Anti-Transportation League on February 11, 1849, this opposition spoke with a loud and penetrating voice. Like many organizations whose cause is basically worthy, the League suffered from the over-enthusiasm of some of its members whose zealousness was thought by more moderate members of the community to be too harsh. Thus, when a measure of responsible government was granted by the British Government and Legislative Council elections instituted for October 1851, the people ranged themselves into two factions, the moderates and the radicals, and feelings ran high. Hall's sympathies were with the moderates. He believed that every man had the right to vote as his conscience dictated in a spirit of independence, and that the utmost independence of thought and action was perfectly compatible with the utmost loyalty to the Governor, as the Representative of the Queen, whom he had been taught by his religious principles to honour. Thus he was indignant and outraged by many of the electioneering practices carried out by the Anti-Transportationists, especially the burning of an effigy of Denison, whom he believed to be

acting conscientiously for the best, and in so doing to be worthy of respect. He was angered, too, by a placard carried by the radicals which denied him the possibility of voting as his conscience dictated, and asserted that, as he was a Government employee, he would vote for a Government sponsored candidate. Sarcastically he commented:

.... he did hope that amongst our pretended patriots, amongst those who had said so much concerning the rights of man, we should have seen that freedom of opinion acknowledged and allowed which was naturally expected he could not but think that profession of loyalty a spurious one which could for difference of political opinion, indulge in personal vindictiveness to one whom he had been taught by his religious principles to honour.

On December 9, 1851, Hall attended a dinner at the Caledonian Hotel in Campbell Town given in honour of W.R. Allison, a nominee to the Legislative Council and a representative of the moderate party. There were forty men present, presided over by J. Leake, Chairman, and J. Lord, Vice-Chairman. The Rev. G. Eastman, C. Headlam and P.H. Gell occupied other prominent positions at the gathering. After the customary loyal toasts, Hall was asked to respond to the toast "Our new Constitution, the Elected and Nominees - May they perform their duties faithfully to their sovereign and to the people". In his address he described the new constitution as a liberal one. considering the peculiar circumstances of the colony, although he was not over-optimistic about the merits of some of those elected, he hoped they would be prompted to do their duty by others such as the nominees. He upheld the right of every man to vote according to his own beliefs and deplored some of the objectionable and outrageous electioneering practices indulged in by the radicals at the recent election. He considered that the convicts, whom he knew so well, had been grossly condemned, and that both the Lieutenant-Governor and the Comptroller-General were prompt and generous in their efforts to carry out any improvements he suggested. He concluded with a plea for loyalty and respect to the Governor as the Queen's Representative. At the close of his speech one member of his audience expressed surprise that a salaried officer of the Convict Department was still an honest man. It was obvious that Hall, isolated in country areas for so long, idealistic and well-intentioned, had much to learn about the Convict Department.⁵

⁵ Advertiser, Dec. 12, 1851.

On May 18, 1852, the Halls' eldest daughter turned eighteen. To celebrate this important occasion Mary Jane and her parents visited Hobart Town to attend several social functions. On Monday, May 24, Hall attended a Levee at Government House, held by Denison in honour of the anniversary of the Queen's Birthday. The Levee, complete with a guard-of-honour and the band and colours of the 99th Regiment, was attended by Colonel Butterworth, the Governor of Singapore. On the evening of May 25 the Halls accompanied their daughter, a lively girl who was fond of dancing, to the Governor's ball.

In the later part of 1852, Hampton, who was on a tour of inspection of penal establishments in the colony, visited the Ross stations. He praised Hall's management unreservedly, remarking that the Ross establishments were amongst the best managed in the state and, though he rarely visited a station where he had no fault to find, those under Hall's care were an exception. Unfortunately for Hall the happy state of affairs at Ross did not continue. Owing to some incident in September, of which the details cannot be traced, the Assistant-Superintendent at the Female Factory and his wife were dismissed. Hall was left to manage the station almost single-handed with the assistance of only one competent female officer. Even under these circumstances Visiting Magistrate T. Mason on his monthly tour of inspection was able to write on October 15, 1852

....The establishment is in the same clean state and good order as previously to the dismissal of Mr and Mrs _____, although the duties are exceedingly onerous upon the officers remaining. The women seem perfectly contented, and make no complaints. The provisions have been satisfactory. Few cases have been tried either of men or women during the month of September.

In October Hall, whose health was being impaired by the overtaxing of his mental and physical powers, concluded that he had not been given adequate protection and support by the Comptroller-General during the very arduous and trying events which had occurred in September at the time of the dismissal. Feeling that he could not execute his duties satisfactorily or honourably to himself, and hence not advantageously to the Government or beneficially to the prisoners, he resigned his office as Medical Superintendent. Understandably enough, Hampton was annoyed by the inconvenience and Hall's inference of lack of support, and probably more so by his spirit of independence which was prepared to sacrifice a part of his income in support of a principle.

Hall's official authority at Ross ceased on November 12, 1852. Before leaving he invited all the Justices of the Peace in the district to join the official Visiting Magistrate on a last visit. Two Justices, Benjamin Horne and Arthur Leake of Ashley, accepted his invitation. Both commended Hall for the exemplary cleanliness, perfect order and comfort of the various departments. The day after his retirement Hall received an Address from his former staff:

Ross Female Factory
11th November, 1852

Sir,

We, the officers of the above establishment cannot allow you to leave Ross without conveying to you our heartfelt sorrow at your departure. Some of us have lived under your superintendence some considerable time, and are well able to form a judgment of you, both as a public officer and a private gentleman whose private interests have invariably been put aside for the public good. It would be useless to further comment on the matter, for your worth as a man and as an indefatigable public officer is well known to us. Therefore, we wish you, your kind lady and all your family, all the happiness that it may please a Supreme Being to grant you.

Many years later, in 1881, at the close of his life, Hall remembered and spoke of the scene at his departure from the Ross Female Factory and of the women who knelt before him, with tears streaming down their cheeks, calling down a blessing on the "just doctor". Their reason for blessing him in this way was revealed in 1855 by Hall's own words with which he compared his behaviour in Ross to that of some other officials in the Convict Department:

....This is very certain; I built no house, I wore no clothes, I traded in nothing wrong from the labours of those under my charge; I offended not the sight of any of my neighbours; I violated neither the laws of decency or the rules of discipline by the unusual (at least in Van Diemen's Land) employment of women in the labours of men; I raised no onions etc. for sale by the toils of pregnant women, or enriched my garden by tasking the strength of women recently confined and still undischarged from the lying-in-hospital. In fact, I was as poor, and as honest, thank God, as if I had never been a superintendent of convicts, and carried nothing more away with me from Ross of this world's goods, than I took there, with the addition of the hard earned, profitless, yet, after all, dearly prized tears and blessings of society's outcasts and the unusual but very emphatic title of the "just doctor".⁶

⁶ Ross and Saltwater River story
Advertiser, Sept. 11, 1855
Tasmanian Daily News, Sept. 18, Oct. 26, 1855.

SALTWATER RIVER

Reduced on his own initiative to the status of Assistant Colonial Surgeon at the rate of 10/- per day, plus 2/6 contingency money, plus quarters, Hall was offered a position at Saltwater River on Tasman's Peninsula caring for the lunatics in the place of Assistant Surgeon Everitt who was transferred to Ross to succeed Hall as Medical Superintendent. Everitt arrived in Ross a few days before Hall's departure so that the two men could exchange information about their future duties. Having resigned as Medical Superintendent partly because he badly needed quiet and relaxation to restore his health, Hall was very disheartened by Everitt's account of the unsatisfactory state of the accommodation, staff, supplies and conditions at the lunatic asylum. Half apologizing for his failure to correct the situation, Everitt explained that he was still suffering from ill-health after his return from Norfolk Island and had been debarred from active exertion during his two months' stay at Saltwater River; consequently he was able to visit the establishment only once a day and never went out at night. He emphatically warned Hall not to be misled as he had been at first; that corruption was so widespread that it was not safe to trust anyone and that he would be sure to conflict disagreeably with convict officials if he tried to make improvements.

Very concerned Hall sought an interview with Shanks in Hobart Town on his way to the Peninsula. Hinting to his superior what he believed to be awaiting him at Saltwater River, he requested Shanks to pay an early visit and asked for his support in any reforms in management he might make. Shanks regretted that ill-health prevented him from visiting the Peninsula but promised his support of Hall's reforms. When asked for directions concerning the management of the insane, he proffered some verbal ones and promised fuller instructions in writing at a later date. Of the verbal orders given him, Hall was most impressed by that which insisted that such lunatics as were physically fit were to be worked under the charge of an underkeeper, doing the work of the station as the Assistant-Superintendent should require. When this direction was emphasized by the Comptroller-General also in Hall's interview with him, he was both surprised and dismayed, for the prominent use of this practice in the treatment of lunatics painfully offended his professional feelings.

By chance Hampton was a passenger on the steamboat "Derwent" which carried the Hall family to Saltwater River, one of four stations situated on the shore of Norfolk Bay in the north of Tasman's Peninsula. On arrival at the jetty he preceded the Halls ashore to make the usual tour of inspection of the hospital, lunatic asylum and the penal station. This meant that the Comptroller-General saw the state of affairs at Saltwater River exactly as Hall found them on his arrival, a fact which the doctor did not forget.

The family's first impression of Saltwater River was not a happy one. Whereas Everitt had been given the best house for his residence, Hall was allotted the one previously occupied by the Assistant-Superintendent who was now living in the doctor's house. Hall's house was so dilapidated and insecure that not only did water pour in whenever it rained, but during the first week absconders, who had been at large some time, entered in the night and robbed them of everything they could carry off. In spite of Hall's immediate and oft repeated requests to have repairs carried out, nothing was done during the three months of their residence.

Professionally Hall was deeply shocked by his first sight of the hospital and lunatic asylum:

.... the hospital, well situated, and a neat, small commodious building, was in a most deplorable state of filth and neglect. The walls, black with smoke and filth, floors dirty, bedsteads and beds disgusting. The yard, strewn with bones, refuse and rubbish of all kinds. Those who had to visit the sick there sat in a state of nausea and misery whenever they had to officiate at the bedside, owing to the stench and dirt, and carried away with them a perfect army of vermin. The whitewash or the scrubbing brush had long been strangers in the building.

The barracks for the accommodation of the unfortunate lunatics had formed a part of the original penal station and such a wretched provision for the insane I had never before witnessed; nor do I think it could be paralleled except in the age of the philanthropic Howard. It was out of sight of the public, of a prying press or a criticizing "Morgan", or such a state of things could not have existed long. There was a large mess room, unceiled, unplastered, with flagged floor, one fireplace, windows unglazed, but provided with shrunken shutters of wood. When wind or rain came from the west (the prevailing quarter) the shutters had to be closed and the place was in obscurity. Rickety old station forms were the only seats provided.

There was next a large dormitory of a similar character to the mess room - perhaps I should say a double dormitory, as there was a division across with a communicating door. These had been made out of a number of prisoners' dormitories into one long

continuous apartment, by removing all the dividing partitions but one, and leaving all the original doors and unglazed windows. On a windy night, such a draught pervaded the place, that the lamps were often blown out. The floor was bricked, tiled and flagged; there was a fireplace in each division. The inmates, however, had the comfort of bedsteads and were not put in horrid bunks as they are now at Impression Bay.

Another long dormitory of similar construction but inferior in every respect (except that it had a boarded floor) existed at some distance from the former. It had no fireplace, and was a perfect temple of winds, from the numerous imperfect doors and windows and defective shingling, and often were the poor sleepers wet in their beds when it rained. For want of sufficient bedsteads, many of the patients had to sleep on the floor.

There was a dismal prospectless yard enclosed for about ten feet high, with boards in which the men could exercise in fine weather, but there was no shelter there from the sun. A wash house and a privy completed the accommodations. At some distance a row of old, narrow, comfortless station cells away from any surveillance were allotted for some of the insane; but there was not a single place provided in which a riotous or unmanageable patient could be safely and comfortably trusted apart. The sick, however, were generally removed to the hospital for treatment. The food was cooked in the kitchen of the distant hospital. Of the neglected and filthy state of the miserable quarters allotted to these afflicted beings, some idea may be formed when I say that mouldy human excrement was found behind the beds.

When Hall took charge, there were between sixty and seventy lunatics in the asylum, many of them free and paid for by the colony. Some were so helpless they had to be assisted in and out of bed, dressed and fed by the attendants; some were frequently afflicted by epileptic fits, and others subject to such outbursts of fury that they were dangerous to all around them. Indeed, several severe injuries, both to lunatics and attendants, had occurred from this cause. Many suffered from an involuntary discharge of faeces every night, whilst others never ceased tearing their clothes and bedding to ribbons.

Although shocked and angered Hall did not blame the Medical Officers who preceded him, or even the underkeeper who was in charge. These men were not responsible for the wretched and insufficient accommodation provided, nor for the number and quality of the staff. Rather the blame rested squarely on the system which was regulated by the Principal Medical Officer and the Comptroller-General and allowed by the Governor. The staffing situation was particularly appalling and could in no way be excused.

According to the "Lunatic Act", these men were "of unsound mind unfit to be at large and incapable of maintaining themselves". To care for sixty to seventy of them, only four attendants were allowed, that is, one to every fifteen, whereas in an ordinary hospital, the number of attendants was one to ten patients. Of these four, one attendant did the cooking required with such help as he could get from the lunatics, another all the washing. In addition, the gate had to be attended to, the patients watched wherever they might be, the wards cleaned, the beds made, the lunatics assisted, and all other daily duties performed with only the assistance they could coax from wayward lunatics, which was often worse than useless. Nor was that all: even at night they were unable to rest quietly and refresh themselves after their hard day's work, but were placed to sleep two in each dormitory, one to be constantly up to assist and guard the inmates. Pleaded Hall:

....I ask any man of common sense, could it be possible for four men properly to go through such an amount of daily and nightly labour ?....

Moreover, these attendants were selected from prisoners who had finished their sentence on the Peninsula, or from invalids whose health had improved sufficiently to allow them to undertake the duty. In addition, there were two underkeepers: the senior underkeeper, who was responsible for the superintendence of the lunatic asylum, was a newly appointed married man with a family, who arrived on the same day as Hall, having had no previous experience in such a position; the other acted as overseer to the gang sent out each day with handcarts to draw shells or loam or do whatever work was required. Both Hall and the two underkeepers lived outside the asylum, so that after locking up hours the whole establishment was under the care of the four attendants. After Hall took charge, another underkeeper, a free man, was appointed. As he was a single man, Hall insisted that he sleep within the asylum.

In time Hall's refusal to blame the preceding Medical Officers was confirmed when he discovered that, previous to Everitt's appointment, the insane for years were under the medical charge of a doctor stationed at Impression Bay five miles away. He, in fact, was able to pay only an occasional, hasty visit as his duties at Impression Bay were heavy enough. He learnt, also, that there had been continuous conflict between the previous underkeeper, who had resigned in disgust, and other officers of the asylum and the Assistant-Superintendent of the station

over the rations supplied. He too complained frequently about short weight and had supplies of bread and meat made good by Assistant-Superintendent Galt.

In spite of formidable difficulties, Hall did what he could to improve conditions. Firstly, he was convinced from the appearance of the lunatics that they had received insufficient food. To overcome this, he frequently inspected the food while cooking, visited at meal times, often weighed their food after it was shared out, saw what each man ate, and found out if they were satisfied. As a result, he increased the supply of bread considerably beyond the authorized rations. Three or four times a day, when least expected, he visited the asylum, as well as inspecting each patient in his bed between nine and ten o'clock each night; often he watched them unobserved through the inspecting holes, even during the night. Soon he was pleased to see a great improvement in their appearance. He also worked vigorously to put the hospital and asylum stores, drugs, clothing, bedding and so on in order. Although his subordinates generally worked willingly, he was continuously thwarted and angered by the station officers on whom he was dependent for supplies, with the result that there were many disagreeable and trying conflicts. Although he did not wish to trouble Shanks whose health was not good, he did not leave him entirely in ignorance of affairs at Saltwater River. In his reply on January 7, 1853, Medical Clerk M. Burgess included words which held an ominous ring for Hall and other Medical Officers, and confirmed their own growing realization:

The Principal Medical Officer regrets much to hear so unsatisfactory an account of the Saltwater River Hospital on your taking charge, still more to find that so many obstacles are thrown in your way to putting things in proper order. He is prepared to afford you all the support he can, altho' recent events render it hopeless to expect adequate redress for officers of the Medical Department.

As Hall read these words he knew that if "right" were to prevail, a conflict with officers of the Convict Department was inevitable, although why it should be necessary, how, and when it would take place, no one knew. He was reminded of his boyhood resolution, "Whatever betide, for the right".

Whether the Comptroller-General encouraged Galt to frustrate Hall's reforms cannot be certain. Later, Hall accused Hampton of doing so out of petty, personal spite. In any case, he did not see that

Hall's attempts at reform were given the support they deserved. On one of two visits which he paid to Saltwater River whilst Hall was in charge the doctor personally pointed out the wretched state of the second dormitory, showing him where rain came in on the sleeping lunatics, and the defective windows and doors. He asked that the shingling be made waterproof, the roof ceiled with boards, proper ventilation be put in above the lamps, doors bricked up, windows glazed and fireplaces built. Hampton promised it would be done immediately, but though Hall remained on Tasman's Peninsula ten months, nothing was done whilst he was there. Also there were petty annoyances which continually prevented the smooth accomplishment of his plans; there was his house to which no repairs were done; Galt was insolent in his petty authority and his behaviour a bad example to his subordinate officers; and a man whom Hall had suspended from assuming duty as an overseer at Ross because of intoxication and unseemly behaviour in front of prisoners, was sent to Saltwater River to be an overseer there; naturally he made mischief, aligning himself with two of Hall's subordinate officers who resented his keen oversight of their work, until one was dismissed and the other sentenced.

On the night of February 1, 1853, there occurred in one of the dormitories an incident which profoundly affected Hall's future. The two attendants in charge at the time had both been invalids, one for impaired vision resulting from ophthalmia, the other from a rheumatic affliction with heart disease for which he was still under medical treatment. Some time after Hall's nightly visit, one of the lunatics, George Hickman, a free man paid for by the colony, upset the urine tub, washed his hands in the contents, and became so unruly that the attendant on duty, T. Brennan, called the other, R. Toole, out of bed to assist in putting handcuffs upon him. These were secured behind and he was put into bed. This was the usual practice before Hall took charge as there was no other means of restraint. Although Everitt had asked for strait jackets, these were not provided. In the morning, when the attendants went to get him out of bed, Hickman was dead. As soon as the underkeeper unlocked the dormitory, the attendants reported the incident to Hall. In answer to his query why they used handcuffs, they replied that Hickman, though usually a harmless imbecile, when he was in one of his freaks, went to the patients' beds, struck them and pulled them out. They had not taken the handcuffs off during the night as they knew from past

experience this would incite him to further violence. For some time Hall had been worried by the use of handcuffs, which had always been under the charge of the underkeeper, and had directed that they should never be used without immediately telling him. However, as the two attendants did not conceal the fact that Hickman died in handcuffs, which they could easily have done, as sudden death was common to the patients, he was convinced that they were guilty only of a bad error of judgment and not of any intentional and unnecessary cruelty. Nevertheless, he reported the incident immediately to the Coroner and an inquest was held.

Hall's conscientious effort to follow the correct procedure unfortunately did not produce the results he expected. To his great astonishment, the jury, with one exception (the Coroner's District Constable), was composed of the convict officers of the station, including the man whom he had suspended at Ross and others with whom he had conflicted. The finding of the jury was "died by the visitation of God", but it was accompanied by a rider which Hall considered unjustly reflected upon the management of the asylum rather than on its provisions, and found the attendants guilty of intentional cruelty rather than of ignorance. Although he thought the verdict wrong and unjust, Hall, nevertheless, forwarded it by the first post to the Principal Medical Officer, enclosing full details and his own comments, especially emphasizing his opinion that restraint in the treatment of lunacy should only be used to prevent patients from injuring themselves or others, and that the utmost kindness and strictest justice, allied with firmness, were essential to their treatment.

Hall was completely unprepared for what followed. Denison directed the setting-up of a Board of Enquiry comprised of James Smith, the Visiting Magistrate at the Coal Mines and Saltwater River, and Dr Galbraith, a staff surgeon, to enquire into and report on the circumstances surrounding Hickman's death and on certain charges made against Hall as to the general management of the asylum.

The Board began its enquiry at Saltwater River on February 4, 1853. Hall objected both to its constitution and procedure; although Galbraith admitted to his inexperience in such matters, he was, none-the-less, most offensive in his statements, especially about handcuffs. Smith was the Visiting Magistrate at the asylum and already biased. Contrary to the attendants' original statement, the Board found that Hickman was not acting violently when handcuffed; also, that his death,

though not caused solely by suffocation, as was proved by the post-mortem examination made on the body by Hall, was at least hastened by his, helpless state as he was of infirm body, and that handcuffing and leaving him so restricted in bed was an inhuman and unjustifiable act. Referring to Hall's statement concerning the jury at the inquest, that 'he is among a set of men ready to conspire for anything against him', the Board accused Hall of making broad assertions without sufficient grounds to prove them.

In view of Hall's previous contacts with Shanks, both personally and by letter, the Principal Medical Officer's letter to the Comptroller-General on February 22, 1853, which accompanied the Board's report, was surprisingly harsh and damaging towards the subordinate officer, and sufficiently so to substantially alter his career in the Medical Department:

....but in reading Mr Hall's letter I look in vain for any outburst of indignation against the attendants for their brutality. Mr Hall only blames the men for having used the mode of restraint so long. He sees, apparently, no impropriety in the torture, and by admitting their worthless excuse that 'from experience they knew it would not do to release Hickman', he identifies himself with a system of treatment which might have passed current some twenty to thirty years ago, but which would now be considered a disgrace to humanity.

Further, he accused Hall of adopting a strange course to protect himself from those conspiring against him, by supporting instead of prosecuting the attendants; and, by not calling in another Medical Officer at the inquest, of lessening the value of his evidence and giving his enemies cause to accuse him of a desire to frustrate the ends of justice. Shanks concluded

....From the result of this investigation, I am of the opinion that Mr Hall is unfitted for the charge of the insane and I beg to recommend his removal from the Lunatic Depot accordingly.

When he forwarded all the Hickman papers to the Governor for his perusal, the Comptroller-General added his own opinion that Hall was not fitted to be retained in the Government Service as he had delegated his authority to others in such a way as to cause the death of a harmless imbecile under circumstances of great brutality and had identified himself with a treatment disgraceful to humanity. His words were harsher than Shank's:

The brutal conduct of the two convict attendants, altho' highly reprehensible, and calling for punishment, appears to me to be in a great degree attributable to the manner in which Dr Hall

discharged the trust confided to him, especially looking at the fact that he now endeavours to vindicate proceedings which I am convinced caused Hickman's death by suffocation, and that similar treatment has habitually been inflicted on other lunatics under Mr Hall's care.

Hampton recommended that, if Hall were retained in the service, he should be severely reprimanded, and that, if there were any more complaints, he should be dismissed. Further, he suggested that Hall should serve only in a strictly medical establishment such as the General Hospital at Hobart Town or Launceston, as the "temper and litigious spirit" which he had recently shown did not fit him for employment at a convict station. The two attendants were to lose their Tickets-of-Leave and serve six months probation at the Saltwater River station. On March 1, 1853, Denison gave the final verdict; Hall was not fit to have charge of the lunatic asylum; he was to be severely reprimanded and removed. If he were to be employed at all, considering the circumstances both at Ross and Saltwater River, it was not to be in a separate charge but in a situation where his peculiarities of temper would never affect his usefulness. Any future improper conduct would receive instant dismissal. Accordingly, Hall was severely censured by the Principal Medical Officer and removed to Impression Bay. Up till now Hall did not realize that truth could be distorted and changed, intentionally or otherwise, as it passed through the formal procedures of government, in spite of his former experiences with Roper at Brighton and Schaw at Bothwell. Consequently, he was deeply shocked and angered by the outcome of the Board of Enquiry. He was prepared to accept the Governor's and the Comptroller-General's opinions for what they were worth; to the Governor he felt some slight gratitude for his acceptance of the more lenient of the recommendations put to him. Hampton, he considered, merited no respect for condoning situations such as those at Saltwater River. But the Principal Medical Officer's censure he found "galling in the extreme". It was both unjust and undeserved. In time he realized that allowances had to be made for Shanks who was a sick man already dying of the disease which killed him, irritable and unable to suffer any worry. Several other Medical Officers about this time received similar treatment from him. As it happened, the two men did establish friendly, cordial relations again, and Hall was convinced that Shanks later regretted the harsh judgment he had passed, especially as Hall and not his superior officer at Impression Bay was appointed to attend the lunatics during the resident doctor's absence on leave from Saltwater River.

As far as Hall's appointment at the asylum was concerned, however, the damage was done. On March 23, after four arduous and difficult months, during which time the quiet and relaxation he hoped for to restore his health had completely eluded him, he commenced work at the probation stations at Impression Bay and its neighbour, the Cascades. Hall's main task was to assist Dr Eckford, the surgeon in charge, care for the invalids, crippled and aged, who were maintained at Impression Bay. There were about four hundred men of whom about one hundred were invalids, some nearly ninety years old, many of them free paupers charged to colonial funds. Once again Hall found his duties very heavy. Conditions for the patients were bad here too; often there was an insufficiency of firewood both for cooking and for fires. These conditions were reported to the Superintendent and to the Comptroller-General but nothing was done to correct them. However, Hall did not remain on Tasman's Peninsula very long. At the end of November, 1853, he was transferred to Hobart Town to become Resident House Surgeon in charge of the General Hospital. Like the convict women at the Ross Female Factory, the invalids and aged were sad to see him go and gave him their blessing. After nineteen and a half years in country areas Hall returned to the city and commenced his duties at the Hospital on December 1.

S E C T I O N T W O

THE TRANSITION PERIOD

1853 - 1859

CHAPTER 7

HOBART TOWN AGAIN

The move to Hobart Town was the beginning of a new life for the Hall family. With the exception of Mary Jane, all the children were country born and bred, accustomed to clean pure air, wholesome food which was often grown in their own garden, wide open spaces with the peaceful quietness they offer, and the invigorating freedom of country life. Now they took up residence in the confined quarters of the Resident House Surgeon at the General Hospital in the heart of the city. No doubt the change was a difficult one for all members of the family whose keener, less abused senses noticed more than those long accustomed to their surroundings.

Actually, the Halls arrived in Hobart Town at a critical time in the town's history. Indeed, 1853 was a year no resident was ever likely to forget. By this time the growing town, like many another city in Australia, England and elsewhere in the nineteenth century, possessed two faces, one of beauty and one of evil; which face was revealed depended upon the eyes of the observer. L. Meredith saw beauty:

The situation of the town is the most beautiful that can be conceived - on the rising banks of the noble Derwent, with green meadows, gardens and cultivated land around it, interspersed with pleasant country residences and farms and, above and beyond all, the snowy mountain peaks soaring to the very clouds The shops were numerous and good and the buildings neat and substantial chiefly of brick, but many of the newer ones of cut stone. Some of the more suburban streets, or rather the suburban ends of them, consisting of good detached houses standing in nice gardens and adorned by verandahs covered with lovely plants, are very pleasant, commanding fine views of the harbour.¹

H.B. Stoney saw differently:

For a city of but fifty years' growth none ever equalled Hobart Town in beauty, as it is first seen. Yet, on a nearer inspection, it has many defects; and the very

¹ L.A. Meredith My Home in Tasmania (London, 1852), pp. 21 & 23.

irregularity of its streets, which seem to the stranger to add to its beauty, are sad drawbacks to the advantage of trade, to the cleanliness of its streets or the general comfort of the inhabitants; for though we must in truth own, that as to general appearance and situation Hobart Town stands pre-eminent in beauty as a city, yet when the stranger enters its streets, he is sadly disappointed, and cannot fail to remark the lack of order and cleanliness everywhere so apparent. When, therefore, one considers the means which, during fifty years, were in the hands of the rulers of Tasmania, and the immense amount of convict labour ever at their disposal, it seems a matter of great surprise that to this hour the sideways remain unflagged - that there is no sewerage of the town - and that an open creek, still in its original state, is allowed to remain as a receptacle for every nuisance, and, from the imperfect bridges over it, likely every season, after heavy rains, to threaten the city with an inundation most destructive to life and property. These evils we trust will soon vanish and when we look at the large amount of capital in the city and the daily increasing importance and general wealth of the community, ere a few months glide over us, the interior of the city will equal the extreme beauty of the bird's eye view.² ■

Unfortunately, the evils which Stoney saw could not be as easily and quickly remedied as he hoped, since the problems were difficult and had their origin in the minds and habits of people. Hobart Town was a new city, carved out of virgin forest in a new land, isolated from the old world. There was plenty of raw material, both wood and stone; there was an abundance of convict labour to work it. Free from the restrictions of centuries of accumulated buildings and traditions, there was every opportunity to avoid the evils which beset the cities of England and Europe. But its people, habituated to time-honoured traditional ways brought with them from their original home environment, lacked the understanding, the knowledge and the vision necessary to keep it so. Over the years evils increased steadily, gathering momentum; in spite of isolated, desultory attempts by individuals to attack them, perception and understanding of them and the determination to be rid of them lagged sadly behind. By the early 1850s Hobart Town, in spite of its superficial beauty, could boast that it, too, had a social and health problem relatively equal in magnitude to that of any city in England, and sometimes far worse. In England by 1850 the bad social consequences of an increasing urban population - poor housing, overcrowding, insufficient ventilation, lack of sanitation, inadequate water supply and spread of disease - were recognized and attempts were being made to correct them.

² H.B. Stoney A Year in Tasmania (Hobart Town, 1854), p. 11.

In Hobart Town, however, where an increasing population had produced similar results, the citizens were isolated from the benefits of example and slumbered in ignorance of the dangers of their situation. For those who slumber there is a time of waking; for the people of Hobart Town it was in 1853.

The year began with a severe epidemic of influenza which claimed many lives. So destructive were its effects that the Tasmanian Colonist was induced to take some interest in health matters. Health is freedom from disease. To understand the exact nature of a disease, its causes, and its prevention, its origin must be understood. To understand and destroy the origin of disease is to understand and create health.

"On the issue of the origins of disease, especially of infection," bewailed the Lancet in 1853, "all is darkness and confusion, vague theory and vague speculation." "What is cholera?" it asked in listing explanations of the most dramatic and most horrible of contemporary epidemics. "Is it a fungus, an insect, a miasm, an electrical disturbance, a deficiency of ozone, a morbid off-scouring from the intestinal canal? We know nothing; we are at sea in a whirlpool of conjecture."³

Three rival theories attempted to explain the phenomenon of infection. First, there was the germ theory of infection by a living organism; as it lacked conclusive experimental proof, it had few followers. The second was that of spontaneous generation of disease within the blood; being chemical in its formation, it ruled out the possibility of contagion. The third, the atmospheric or pythogenic, was the most popular and the most widely held. As it was also the one commonly accepted in Hobart Town in 1853, R. Lambert's description is helpful:

Thirdly, there was the atmospheric or pythogenic theory, much vaguer and more embracing than the others. Under certain mysterious circumstances, it held, the atmosphere became charged with an "epidemic influence" which in turn became malignant when it combined with the exhalations of organic decomposition from the earth. The resulting gases, ferments or miasms (the agents were diverse) produced diseases. Capable of infinite variation, the theory generally discountenanced contagion. As it seemed to explain the partiality of epidemic diseases for the undrained, uncleaned, filthy and stinking areas of the towns inhabited by the poor, the pythogenic theory found widespread acceptance among the first generation of English sanitary reformers. Florence Nightingale and Edwin Chadwick clung to it throughout

³ R. Lambert Sir John Simon (London, 1963), p. 48.

their long lives. It became during the 40s and 50s the orthodoxy of the public health movement and concentrated attention on environmental problems rather than on those of personal health and infection.⁴

On January 10, 1853, the Tasmanian Colonist adopted this theory as the basis for its thinking, when it introduced the city's sanitary condition as an important subject which urgently required the attention of the newly elected aldermen of the City Corporation. In the editorial, which was the beginning of a long and arduous battle to improve the city's sanitation and health, the Colonist began the attack by drawing attention to various localities where the accumulation of filth, stagnant water and want of drainage were a menace to Public Health. Likewise, it pointed out that underground drainage by sewers seldom existed in areas frequented by the poor, and that where it did exist in the main streets it was more a menace than a benefit to the householder.

Why the proper authorities, with the great amount of available labour at their disposal, have not done more to improve the town is a mystery. There has been the most culpable neglect on the part of somebody.

A general survey of the entire city was suggested so that sewerage could be extended to all areas.

The Municipal Council, which was elected for the first time on January 1, 1853, to care for the city's streets, water supply, lighting, sanitation, health and other corporate affairs, was hardly recovered from its birth. Nevertheless, using its feeble strength it began the formidable task confronting it. Buildings in the city were valued, a rate of ninepence in the pound was set, and a municipal income of less than six thousand pounds arrived at, a very small amount with which to perform the huge task of improving the city. In addition to the Town Clerk and other officers, a City Inspector and a Collector of Rates were appointed. Moreover, a large work force was hired to construct a reservoir to provide an ample water supply; a large quantity of stones was broken up to repair some of the streets, and work was begun on the surface draining of four streets, Brisbane, Bathurst, Melville and Argyle, at certain sections. As the city was still unlighted, much to the surprise of visitors and the annoyance of others, enquiries were made concerning this, too, but it was found to be too expensive.

It was a praiseworthy beginning. But, alas, the city's problems were immense; left to grow unheeded and unchecked for too long,

⁴ Ibid.

they needed much greater effort to correct them than the young Council could muster, if the calamity and suffering predicted by thoughtful, responsible persons were to be avoided. By the end of April, the epidemic of influenza was still raging throughout the city, causing the Hobart Town Guardian to join in the attack on the lack of proper drainage and the large accumulations of filth which were causing a foetid, impure atmosphere:

In many parts of this straggling city there are nuisances which would be disgraceful to the dirtiest hamlet or village in any country in the world; drains pouring into the streets from cess-pools, water closets and other abominations; dark green, stagnant and putrefying pools and ditches of decomposing vegetable matter, pregnant with abundance of malaria which is wafted by the wind all over the city - to the mansions of the wealthy, and to the hovels of the poor - and being closely incorporated with the air we breathe, the pestilent miasma is at once received into the system where it vitiates, impoverishes and contaminates the blood, deranges the whole nervous system and, in a word, places the unfortunate victim under the decided influence of the influenza.⁵

In May, the suffering and loss of life caused by the influenza, which mainly affected adults, was increased alarmingly by an outbreak of a virulent form of scarlet fever which concentrated on the children. On the 16th, the Colonist, with a slight note of panic, warned again that, unless the streets, lanes and alleys were cleaned, a far more fatal pestilence would result; now the City Inspector was blamed for his failure to clean the streets immediately; a horse and cart and one constable, always under his orders, should be provided to assist him. Three days later the Hobart Town Rivulet was described as a common sewer and a depository for every filth, including dead animals; the sheds, built by encroachers over the creek in places where the water was stagnant, were also highly objectionable. As dogs were particularly susceptible to the prevailing sickness, many had died; there was scarcely a street but where two or three of the decaying and mutilated bodies were lying about in the public thoroughfares. Fortunately, it was winter time and cold, or the stench would have been intolerable. Although there was a clause in the Police Act to control such nuisances, it was not enforced and should be now. On May 21, the Guardian insisted that there was scarcely a street in which a nuisance of some offensive kind did not exist; streets such as the High Street on the east side of

⁵ Guardian, April 30, 1853.

the New Town Road, Argyle, Bathurst, Murray, Melville, Campbell, Brisbane, Elizabeth, Collins and others all lacked surface drains on the sides and were a continual source of pollution and pestilence. On May 26 the residents were shocked when they heard that one poor family, named Pershaw, which resided near the Rivulet in Campbell Street, had lost four children with scarlet fever in the space of several days, and that the other children were also ill with the disease. Their house was extremely low, badly ventilated, unsewered and surrounded by accumulated dirt and rubbish. On the same day a correspondent to the Colonist drew attention to other physical and social evils which prevailed to a frightful extent in the town, particularly mentioning the very numerous lodging houses which existed in almost every street in all parts of the city. Here, in an atmosphere of moral misery and wretchedness, hundreds of ex-prisoners and others of both sexes congregated together at night, lying packed tightly together on the floor, fifteen to twenty people to one room.

In June, large numbers of children were dying from scarlet fever still. Doctors were divided in their opinions on the best form of treatment; in the Courier on June 7 and 9 two diverse treatments were recommended: one, an emetic every morning and the application of cold water; the other, the use of belladonna. On August 4 the Colonist claimed that there was scarcely an adult free from influenza, with its accompanying sore throat, cough and great diminution of strength; whilst scarlet fever, or scarletina as it was sometimes called, still raged amongst the young and the weakly. It appealed to the Government Health Officer and the Medical Profession to attempt to establish the cause of the diseases, whether due to the bad drainage and filth of the city:

Something at all events ought to be done and to be done promptly.

To this appeal Dr T.F. Gorringe of Woodville responded immediately. In a letter to the Courier on August 5, he gave the opinions of eminent British medical men on the treatment of scarlet fever, as published in the Lancet on November 27, 1852. Belladonna was not recommended. To the confused, bewildered and distressed parents of Hobart Town, he offered his own form of treatment: an emetic composed of antimonium tartarizatum - grains one, ipecacuanka powder - grains eight, to be taken immediately on attack, and, in one hour after the emetic has ceased to operate, two

scruples or one drachm of Peruvian bark mixed with a teaspoonful of port wine or water to be taken and repeated every two or three hours. The Council also responded by passing Bye-laws designed to make the streets cleaner. The Courier, like the Colonist, suggested that the Government and the Council should establish a Medical Commission to enquire into the cause of the diseases. Was it due to the unclean streets and the filthy state of the Rivulet ?

As if influenza and scarlet fever were not enough, on August 28 the dreaded scourge of smallpox reared its ugly head. In a supplement to the Government Gazette, the Lieutenant-Governor of Victoria, La Trobe, proclaimed that smallpox had broken out in California, Honolulu and the Sandwich Islands, and that it could be brought to the Australian colonies; henceforth all ships which had visited these places en route to Australia were to be quarantined for a period of not less than two days or more on arrival in Victorian waters. The next day a Government notice, Number 110, in Van Diemen's Land announced that smallpox had appeared in New South Wales. The Medical Department in Hobart Town acted immediately. On August 30, the Hobart Town Gazette advertised that gratuitous vaccination was available on Tuesdays and Fridays from 2 p.m. to 3 p.m. at the General Hospitals at Hobart Town, Launceston, New Norfolk and Ross; in addition all medical practitioners were advised that vaccine lymph was available by post on application to the Principal Medical Officer. The following day a correspondent to the Courier suggested that vaccination should be made compulsory as in Britain. Five weeks later, on October 5, the Legislative Council, alive at last to the dangers of the situation, passed the Vaccination Act which made vaccination compulsory for children above the age of six months and under fourteen years.

All October and November the presence of scarlet fever and the fear of smallpox bedevilled the people, whilst the press urged compliance with the Vaccination Act and exhorted the Government and the Council to take appropriate measures, such as the appointment of a City Health Officer to supervise the wretched lodging houses. Furthermore, on November 9, Denison joined the ranks of those who were clamouring for greater cleanliness in the city by reading a paper to the Royal Society "On Drainage and Sewerage of Towns".⁶ A former captain in the Royal

⁶ W. Denison, "On Drainage and Sewerage etc. of Towns with special relation to the late Epidemics in Hobart Town and Launceston", P.P.R.S., 1854, pp. 361-372.

Engineers, he was eminently suited to offer advice; indeed, there was no better person, for he was one of the commissioners appointed to the Health of Towns Commission in 1844 to enquire into the state of large towns and populous districts in England and Wales. A resident of Woolwich for seven years, Denison was responsible for the Report on the State of Woolwich and Salisbury (London, 1845) which claimed that the cause of diseases in particular localities could be traced to the absence of drainage, neglect of the proper cleansing of the surface of streets by scavengers, and the prevalence of dirty habits amongst the population arising principally from want of water. In every district and large town in England and Wales, the Commissioners found the same: that disease prevailed where there was no drainage, bad ventilation, overcrowding of houses and general want of cleanliness. Now Denison offered the benefit of his experience to Hobart Town. Pointing out that the prevalence of scarlet fever had induced him to present the paper, he detailed the evidence as found by the Health of Towns Commission, and then proceeded to enquire into the principles by which a proper system of drainage could be regulated in Hobart Town and Launceston, discussing briefly the position, size, construction and material of sewers. The paper concluded with a plan for financing the sewerage system by the raising of a loan. On December 2, 1853, the Hobart Town Advertiser wrote:

Drainage and sewerage has begun to occupy a prominent place in the consideration of the inhabitants. The able paper read by Sir William Denison on this subject before the Royal Society and since presented in the form of a pamphlet, has given it an impetus. The late fearful epidemic, due in a great measure to the miasma generated under the city, has given it an importance, unfortunately, impressed too deeply on every one by the loss of relative or friend.

In editorials on December 1 and December 2 the Advertiser and the Courier pleaded with the Government, the Corporation and the people to heed the lessons of the last year and to take action before it was too late.

Almost despairingly, the voice of the Courier rang out:

...At all events it is beyond a doubt that smallpox has been raging throughout the extent of the Pacific Islands and committing fearful ravages there. It is not rational to conclude but that it will march upon the Australian colonies at no distant time, and follow in the wake of the fever which has been permitted to afflict, and is now afflicting our population. What sort of preparation are we making for it? Is a stir got up about cleansing and ventilating dwellings? Is the drainage of Hobart Town being diligently discussed?

Being forewarned, are we forearming ourselves ? Are we preparing to use all human means ? Are we resorting to prophylactic measures, whether municipal or individual ? Not so. As in politics, so in sanitary precaution, we go on never minding it, "Our yesterdays are but as fools to light the way to dusty death", we are carried onwards day after day in a lazy and stupid indifference, until suddenly disease and manifold death comes unexpectedly and like a thunderclap upon us and then we hear a cry of useless and unavailing lamentation.

Thus the stage was set for a grim and bitter drama in which Hall played the leading role.

CHAPTER 8

THE GENERAL COLONIAL HOSPITAL

The General Colonial Hospital was an imposing collection of buildings fronting on Liverpool Street between Argyle and Campbell Streets and bounded at the rear by a sandstone cliff overhanging the Rivulet. Established mainly for the reception of Government servants and prisoners, it was composed of three separate buildings; in front was the male hospital, a handsome cut-stone building, two storeys high, surrounded by an ornamental shrubbery. It contained eight large, well-ventilated wards which held twenty beds each, a good operating room and some smaller wards. At the back were two covered balconies running the whole length of the building, from which fine views of the harbour, the town and the countryside could be seen. Behind this building, which had been erected only a few years, was the original two-storied hospital, established about 1825, which catered for about eighty female patients. Also, there was an infirmary, a large one-storied building, where invalided females were cared for. When Hall commenced duty, there were sixty inmates, many over seventy years of age, with room for more. Besides the three main buildings, there were other outbuildings, comprising the Resident Medical Officer's, the Matron's and the Superintendent's quarters; the ordnance and drug stores, offices, dispensary, dead house, kitchen, laundry and the like. The Hospital received patients of all classes, free people paying fees to the Government of 5/- per day, assigned servants 1/- per day, and paupers 1/- paid by the colony. The medical staff consisted of two military and two civil practitioners, of whom the Resident Medical Officer was one, who cared for about three hundred patients.¹

¹ H.B. Stoney, A Year in Tasmania (Hobart Town, 1854), p. 159. This information was taken from a memorandum supplied by E.S. Hall.

Hall's work was very arduous but stimulating. Always conscientious and determined to perform his duties correctly to the best of his ability, he still smarted at the censure he had received from the Principal Medical Officer over the Hickman Affair and was anxious to redeem his reputation. At the same time, isolated from professional and intellectual contact and absorbed by local problems as he had been whilst in the country, he now found himself out of touch with his new environment and had much to learn. With his customary eagerness and sociability, therefore, he launched himself into the life of Hobart Town. Immediately he sensed that an air of uneasiness hung over the city. Scarcely a family had escaped the ravages of influenza and scarlet fever; most people had suffered personal loss, either of family or friends. Now smallpox and cholera threatened too. Amongst the citizens there was confusion, bewilderment and fear. Many blamed the Medical Profession for its failure to alleviate their suffering; whilst all the time the press continued to hurl invective against the people themselves for their poor habits and indifference to sanitation.

Amongst members of his own profession disquiet of a different order prevailed. The era of the Probation System had drawn to a close; as a method of convict discipline it had failed, to be brought to an ignominious end by the cessation of transportation of convicts to Van Diemen's Land on December 29, 1853. With the consequent unwinding of the System, many Government employees, including Medical Officers, feared for their appointments and what the future might bring. By 1854 the Medical Department was reduced to fourteen officers: four Staff Officers, including the Deputy-Inspector-General of Hospitals, and ten Colonial Medical Officers.² As the number of convicts progressively diminished, all knew that further reductions would be necessary, but no one knew whose turn it would be next. As the needs of private practice were already amply satisfied, the future looked grim indeed.

Again, in the city there were men who rightly or wrongly had grown fat on the convict system. Now that the system was discredited, they were discredited too; there was rumour of bribery and corruption and misuse of public property by members of the Convict Department.

However, Bedford, a prominent surgeon, formerly of the Colonial Hospital and now Director of St. Mary's Private Hospital, did not permit

² G.O. 33/80/1007.

the censure of the Medical Profession to pass unchallenged. On December 4, 1853, in a lecture to the Royal Society on "The Epidemics of 1852-3" he pointed out that scarlet fever was not due to poverty of living like typhus fever, nor to ill-drained dwellings and filth like common fever, but rather to its own peculiar germ which had been brought from Sydney in 1842 and had prevailed ever since. Its severity in this case was due to two factors: the poor state of health of many people recently affected by influenza, and the peculiar epidemic state of the atmosphere which had affected not only men but lower animals too. There had been a previous epidemic in 1842-3, but at that time the general health of the community was better and there were fewer deaths. Proportionately deaths had not exceeded those in England or in other countries; in old, heavily populated countries the disease was always present, in new countries there was less opportunity to build up resistance to it. He concluded with a warning that the

progress of epidemics should be watched with care and attention so that all local circumstances operating or likely to operate on them should be investigated.³

During December and January the press valiantly continued to press upon the Corporation and the people the need for better drainage and sewerage. On December 2 the Advertiser recommended that private cesspools, upon which almost all houses were dependent, should be controlled by the Corporation, and, where sewers did exist, houses should be compulsorily connected to them. Moreover, the Rivulet and its tributaries should be cleared of all obstructions so that a small run of water could keep them clean at all times. On December 8 the Tasmanian Colonist suggested the appointment of a City Board of Health or a Health Officer, and the passing of a Lodging House Act similar to the English Act, designed to licence all lodging houses and place them under the supervision of the Council. More important still, the Colonist attempted to enlighten its readers to the measures which had already been taken by the British Government to improve Public Health in England, measures such as 'The Public Health Act', the 'Nuisances Removal and Diseases Prevention Act', the 'Common Lodging Houses Act' and especially 'The Vaccination Act'. Introducing a lengthy article on "The Public

³ E.S.P. Bedford, "On the Epidemics of 1852-3", P.P.R.S., 1854, pp. 460-477.

Health in England" taken from the London Morning Post the Colonist wrote:

The way in which many localities in this city are choked with filth is positively frightful as regards public health, and on this subject it is the duty of the press to speak out, so that steps may be taken to remedy the evil.

On December 15, the Courier, too, caustically condemned the Hobart Town Corporation for its failure to take action over the last twelve months,

The Corporation have nothing to show. They have met seldom, proposed little and done nothing.

Three weeks later, on January 9, 1854, the Colonist called for a public meeting to consider whether the Rivulet should be covered over.

The stench in some parts of the city is occasionally almost suffocating, in consequence of the hot, dry winds. Something must be done, regardless of cost, to prevent the nauseous collections of filth remaining longer or some fatal disease may be expected to visit Hobart Town.

During the summer months the prevalence of a severe drought greatly increased fears of a worse outbreak of disease; already measles was affecting many children. But, suddenly, the situation changed dramatically; like other freaks of nature which occur unexpectedly from time to time, there now happened in Hobart Town a series of calamities which, though personally and economically disastrous, were undoubtedly beneficial to the Public Health. Towards the end of January, a fire broke out in one of the sheds encroaching over the Rivulet in Liverpool Street and destroyed many houses and other buildings abutting on the creek. Again, on February 26, after months of hot, dry weather, the drought broke with four inches of rain falling during a night and morning. Although all the houses at the lower end of Collins Street were flooded, two houses carried away, cellars inundated, much merchandise lost and two prisoners drowned, the flood was beneficial in that it removed accumulated rubbish, scoured and cleaned drains, and removed obstructions to the Rivulet. Once again, on March 4, Denison stood at the lecture desk of the Royal Society to address the members and the Public "On the Heavy Fall of Rain in Hobart Town on the 26th and 27th of February, 1854, with reference to the Sewerage and Drainage of the city."⁴ However, no sooner were the citizens recovered than the rains came again on March 23 with even greater intensity.

The present inundation was prefaced by an incessant shower which fell from Saturday night and the subsequent day.

⁴ W. Denison, "On the Heavy Fall of Rain in Hobart Town on the 26th and 27th of February, 1854, with reference to the Sewerage and Drainage of the city", P.P.R.S., 1855, pp. 1-5.

Monday night the heavens gathered in blackness and rain descended more freely till about nine on Wednesday morning when it came in torrents with a strong sea breeze.⁵

The town, especially about Liverpool, Collins and Bathurst Streets, was inundated. All business stopped; cellars and rooms on the ground floor were four to five feet under water; hundreds of buildings were submerged; twenty-five houses in Macquarie Street fronting the Old Wharf were flooded; the Rivulet itself presented a terrifying scene as quantities of timber piled up against the bridges. It was the worst flood the city had ever known; at least four men were drowned and losses estimated at over £100,000; mills, houses, barns, stables, bridges and piggeries floated piece by piece to the sea; but the encroachments to the Rivulet were washed away and the city cleared of its filth. With the cleaning of the city, disease, too, was temporarily forgotten.

As the busy weeks of 1854 slipped by, Hall quickly became familiar with most aspects of life in Hobart Town; in turn, the residents learnt something of him too. Still touchy, hurt and quick to anger, he appeared right at the outset of his appointment at the Hospital to be determined to make his position clear to the Public and to be completely intolerant of any nonsense. When the Colonist of March 2 accused him of exercising unusual authority in preventing evangelical ministers of religion from visiting pauper patients, he immediately accused the paper of bringing his name prominently and injuriously before readers on "that notoriously mendacious authority - 'common report'". He made his professional attitude, from which he did not divert all his life, perfectly clear:

Believing as I do, that the regulations for the management of this hospital (enacted by the highest authorities, not by me) are well calculated to benefit the patients themselves and to promote the object for which they are admitted - their restoration to health; I have always endeavoured to carry them out in a vigilant and Christian spirit, without any distinction of persons or reference to class, creed or country; with me, the sick are neither bond nor free, paupers or free payers, but suffering fellow creatures, and as such command my best exertions and kindest sympathies.

Asserting that he always endeavoured to assist patients wherever possible, he advised the Colonist to find out both sides of the question, for, as he said,

I court enquiry and dread nothing but falsehood, prejudice and injustice.⁶

⁵ Colonist, March 23, 1854.

⁶ Colonist, March 6, 1854.

By the Act of Council "Anno Sexto Victoriae Reginae No. 2", gazetted October 9, 1849, the Court of Medical Examiners of Van Diemen's Land could examine and grant "Letters Testimonial" to young men to practise medicine without visiting Britain, provided they were educated in the practice of medicine at the Hobart Town Hospital. In March Hall decided to undertake training courses for young men, as well as his other duties. On March 4 the Hobart Town Daily Courier carried the advertisement

MEDICAL SCHOOL

Her Majesty's General Hospital, Hobart Town.

At this establishment which has beds for 300 male and female patients the undersigned Resident Medical Officer is privileged to receive pupils for instruction in the Medical Profession. He has been extensively engaged both in private and public practice in all the branches of the medical profession for upwards of thirty years and prior to his official appointment fifteen years ago on the Government medical staff of this colony was for many years Honorary Surgeon to one of the largest medical institutions in Great Britain.

Parents or guardians wishing to bring up their sons or wards to the Medical Profession will find they can place them here in a most advantageous position for acquiring a thorough knowledge of Anatomy, Physiology, Pharmacy, Materia Medica, Chemistry, Midwifery, Surgery and the Practice of Physic.

Many of the most eminent Medical Practitioners in this and the neighbouring colonies were educated in this institution.

Terms made known on application.

E.S. Hall

Member of the Royal College of Surgeons and Licentiate of the Worshipful Society of Apothecaries of London.

H.M.G. Hospital, Hobart Town
1st March 1854.

Hall advertised his medical course twelve times in all from March 4 until July 3. Pupils were taken on the same plan as the large Dublin hospitals with which he was familiar. He considered that the opportunities for studying 'morbid anatomy' could not be equalled by any other hospital in the southern hemisphere and that, as there were limitless opportunities for expansion, the Hobart Town Hospital would become the medical college of the southern colonies. Already many of the most capable and successful practitioners of Victoria and Van Diemen's Land were graduates of the Hospital. Although he held high hopes for his medical school, it has not been possible to discover the number of his pupils nor their ultimate success.

On March 8, 1854, Hall extended his personal interests to the Royal Society of which he was elected a member. About the same time he joined the Mechanics' Institute and was soon elected a Vice-President; along with other notable personalities, including the President the Rev. J. Lillie, Archdeacon Davies, R. Dry and others, he offered his services as a lecturer. His first lecture to an audience of about one hundred and fifty people was given on a cold wintry night in June under the chairmanship of Dr Lillie, his subject being "The Structure and Functions of the Organs of Hearing". The Courier, which reported the lecture at considerable length, was enthusiastic in its praise.

The lecturer is evidently well accustomed to the lecture desk; his style is earnest and impressive - his language simple and pure. He has the happy talent of deducing simplicity from complexity and bringing the result of much research within the scope of the understanding of his unprofessional hearers.⁷

At the time of the great flood, Hall also won recognition and the Public's praise for his fine efforts to save three men swept down the Rivulet by the rushing torrent. Although he immediately made preparations to restore those drowned, no bodies were recovered.

It was a favourable beginning to the Halls' new life. However, there still remained one part of the community to which the doctor had not yet been introduced. This meeting took place in June when a fellow member of the Medical Department, W. Benson, who was in medical charge of the female convict establishment at the Cascades, was absent on sick leave in Launceston. Although his duties at the Hospital were very heavy, Hall was instructed to take Benson's place at the Cascades Factory as well. He was appalled by what he found there. In the nursery attached to the Cascades there were from 91 to 126 young children, all under three years of age, the average number being about 110. Hall found the children in a "most pitiable state", most of them needing daily medical treatment. The mortality was frightful. For the two years ending June 30, 1854, 227 children had died, more than 100%; in the last six months 68 had died. None of these deaths had been due to measles or scarlet fever, but rather to the general mismanagement of the children. The Cascades Factory was in a notoriously cold, damp situation in a valley at the foot of Mount Wellington, where the sun's rays, especially in winter, hardly penetrated. In spite of the cold, dank atmosphere the young children were kept out in the yard all day, whatever the weather, with only an

⁷ Courier, June 10, 1854.

open shed for shelter; although there was a stove in the shed, Hall found there was rarely enough fire to keep a person sitting close by warm. He frequently complained to the staff about the lack of warmth. Each day he examined every child and scarcely ever felt a child's feet other than stone cold. Urgently and frequently he asked that more clothing be issued to keep the children warm; even clean clothing just issued was often damp. In addition, he found the sleeping dormitories badly arranged, crowded with berths in two tiers, and so draughty that a child taken out of bed at night was quickly chilled; the dormitories, moreover, were washed daily and were frequently not dry when he visited at noon. Worst of all, he came to the conclusion that neither women nor children received sufficient food; some children were even kept in the cells with their mothers.

On June 20 Margaret Sullivan and her child John, aged three months, were brought to him from the cells. The baby was clad in only an old, thin, calico night gown and a new flannel barrow, with a pair of socks belonging to the woman on its feet. The garments had been given to the woman that morning wet, and were still damp when Hall felt them. He instructed that the child be weaned and taken out of the cell, but found on the next day that it had passed a second night there. He protested against any child being placed in the cells under any circumstances whatever. In spite of his insistence that more clothing be provided, fires lit, and special foods be given to some children, he found his instructions, whether verbal or written, were ignored. When he saw that both women and children admitted to the Cascades Factory from the lying-in establishment at the Brickfields were, without exception, suffering from disease, such as abscesses in the breast and sore eyes from the cold, damp ward there, he decided to take action, although he knew very well that any attempts he made to ameliorate conditions would bring him into conflict with the convict authorities again. However, the Acting Principal Medical Officer, Dr Jackson, promised Hall his support and applied to the Governor for improvements in diet, clothing and so on, which were sanctioned. Even then, Hall was so certain that his instructions were not carried out during his absence that he urged Jackson to obtain an order from the Governor to have all the unweaned children with their mothers transferred to the Infirmary at the Colonial Hospital, where they would be under the sole care of the Medical Department with "carte blanche" as to food etc. Weaned children were

to be sent to the Orphan school. This was done on July 5. At the end of a few months, nearly all the weaned children sent to the Orphan Asylum had died, but at the Infirmary under Hall's care the death rate was reduced to one tenth of what it was at the Cascades. Hampton was invited by Jackson to see the improvement but failed to do so. Hall now found his work extremely arduous and his health began to suffer. In an effort to reduce the pressure, he was granted a house allowance so that he and his family could move to 174 Elizabeth Street. Besides his general patients he cared for eighty to ninety women and the same number of children. Accommodation at the Infirmary, too, was very crowded, many pregnant women being sent there from the Cascades three months before their confinement. Staff, too, was limited, only two officers and a gatekeeper being supplied to care for them all. In spite of these difficulties, the decrease in the mortality rate proved the correctness of Hall's arguments and he was satisfied.

In spite of heavy professional commitments, Hall did not neglect his personal interests nor fail to participate in community affairs. On July 1, 1854, he attended a public meeting which was organized to raise money for the wives and families of soldiers engaged in the Crimean War, and subscribed £1.1.0 to the fund. On August 21 he delivered a second lecture to the Mechanics Institute on the "Organs of Vision" and referred to the splendid painting of "Adam and Eve" which was being exhibited in Hobart Town. Regularly each month he attended the Royal Society.

The rest of the year passed quietly enough. Memories of the diseases of 1853 and the storms of early 1854 were fading; occasionally the press jogged them again. On October 7, the Mercury wrote:

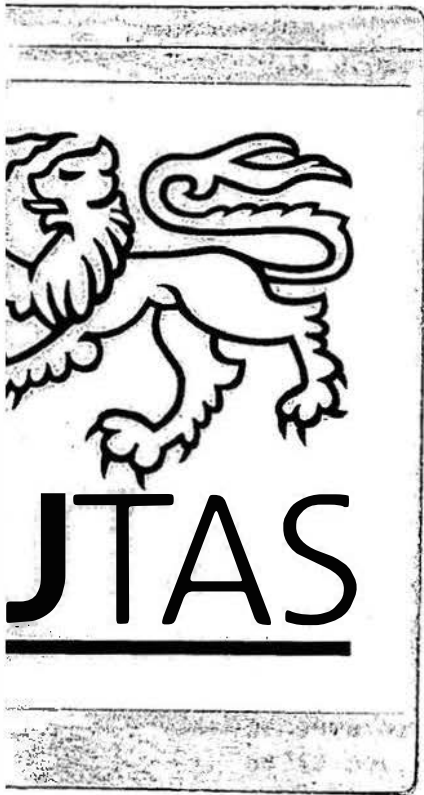
.... That we have no sewerage - that the great mass, if not all, of what are termed drains may be described as accumulations of cesspools - that our water supply is far from complete in extent or effective in detail. We may, perhaps, obtain some light on the subject when we enquire what has been done by those authorities on whom the conduct of the required public improvements rest and find that it all amounts to nothing. We have had a corporation for nearly two years and we, as yet, have no general plan of sewerage formed or adopted. Another flood would find us almost as well prepared for it as we were for the last; another epidemic in a worst condition ...

Those who should lead in the onward march of improvement lay heavily behind - without plan, without object; alive only to the petty business of the hour they wander wearily and confusedly on, finding no profit in the past and no pleasure in the future. As individuals, perhaps, no community in the world presents the apathetic disregard of all but immediate personal requirements that we can and do daily exhibit

The paper suggested the appointment of a Civil Engineer and the drawing up of a complete sewerage plan for which it was certain the Government would agree to guarantee the finance. In spite of all that happened over the last two years the Mercury concluded the year on December 16 with

Sanitary

In the immediate vicinity of the intersection of Barrack and Macquarie Streets, the noses, equally as the eyes of passers by, are fearfully cognizant of the most pestiferous stench, daily arising from a running flow of slaughter house offal, blood and other such hideous matter, issuing forth down the channel of the public street.



CHAPTER 9

1855

1855, a never-to-be forgotten, extraordinary year, began with two important social functions which Hall attended with ten other members of the Medical Profession including T. Atkinson, the new Principal Medical Officer who had recently arrived from England. Both levees were in honour of Governors: the first on January 13 to farewell Denison, who, after eight years, was leaving Tasmania to become Governor-General of Australia; the second on January 16 to welcome Sir Henry Fox Young who arrived in Hobart Town on January 5 in the "City of Hobart" from South Australia where he was Governor for six years. Whilst awaiting Denison's departure on January 13, Sir Henry and his wife were Hampton's guests at Boa Vista.

In its editorial on January 25 the Courier welcomed the new Governor and stressed the favourable circumstances in which the new administration was beginning; under Denison's guidance the two controversial questions of transportation of convicts and constitutional government had been resolved; now it hoped other unsatisfactory situations, such as the "gross jobbery" in the employment of convict labourers and "other mysteries of Dr Hampton's special department", would soon be settled. Somewhat misguided in its prophecy the Courier concluded

He (Young) will come to feel that the people of Tasmania are a loyal and conservative people in the main, ready and anxious to support proper and lawful authorities, never driven to censure or disaffection, except upon such extreme provocation, as is not, we trust, again probable of occurrence. There is no British community in this hemisphere, we maintain, more fit to manage its own affairs than the respectable and intelligent residents in Tasmania. There is so to speak an old-fashioned aversion to political changes and novelties and a leaning to the side of caution, which, specially if we judge rightly, marks the educated population of this island. It will be Sir H. Young's own fault if he comes to find himself in a false position amongst us.

Although political temper and capabilities in Tasmania were untested, there was no doubt about patriotism and loyalty towards Britain which was now deeply engaged in the Crimean War. When all the British colonies were asked to support the Patriotic Fund that assisted the wives and children of servicemen killed in the war, a public meeting was held immediately at the Royal Victorian Theatre on March 10 to consider setting up a local fund. At the meeting, at which Young was formally received by a Guard of Honour and the band of the 99th Regiment, Hall sat on the platform with other notables to represent the lay Roman Catholics on whose behalf he addressed the meeting. Amidst some uproar he emphatically denied the aspersion cast upon Catholics that they did not contribute to such meetings, as funds had already been collected in the churches and handed to the Lord Mayor by the Bishop. Catholics, indeed, were just as loyal and dutiful as anyone else, and just as anxious to assist the widows and adopted children of the nation; he, therefore, contributed £5 towards the fund.¹ On March 14 he was appointed a member of the General Committee of the Patriotic War Fund.² During the existence of the fund from March 10, 1855, to July 16, 1856, £26,294.15.11 ¹/₂ was raised, of which £25,000 was remitted to England on August 17, 1855, and £1,294.15.11 ¹/₂ paid out in expenses, a fine effort for a small community.³

In March, also, Hall found that rumours of further dismissals of Government officers were true when he was reduced from the steadily diminishing Medical Department. However, he was not immediately dismissed but instructed to take medical charge of a vessel bound for Norfolk Island where he was to remain for twelve months to care for two overseers and three or four prisoners who were left in charge of the abandoned penal settlement until the Pitcairn Islanders arrived. He was deeply distressed at this unexpected turn of events: he was fifty-one years of age, frail in health through many years of overwork, of impaired hearing, and with a very large family to support; moreover, he was unwilling to be separated from his family, as his small private practice would be ruined, and his family could not exist on the salary he would receive there, especially in this time of high rents and gold fever prices. He had no alternative but to resign, apply for a Government

¹ Advertiser, March 12, 1855.

² Courier, March 14, 1855.

³ Tasmanian Daily News, August 21, 1856.

pension to which he was entitled, and devote all his professional time to private practice. His resignation was accepted from March 23, 1855, after a service of fifteen years ten months and twenty three days.

He was awarded a pension of £58 per year. As he later said:

Near the close of 1855, at the age of fifty one years,
I had to begin the world again on a pension of £58 a year,
and nothing but what, by the exercise of my profession,
I could earn⁴

On March 27, 1855, the Courier advertised:

Medical

Dr Hall takes leave to inform his friends and the public, that having retired on pension from the Government medical staff, in consequence of reductions ordered by the authorities in England, he is now able to devote the whole of his time to the private practice of his profession.

Dr Hall may be consulted at his residence, Claremont House, New Town Road, corner of Warwick Street, every morning from 8 to 10 o'clock. His fees will be the same as those of the other principal practitioners of the city.

To those poor persons who have hitherto had his public assistance gratuitously, and others, Dr Hall will give his advice every day from 8 to 9 in the morning.

Hobarton

22nd March, 1855.

Once again, the pattern of Hall's life changed; his patients at the Colonial Hospital and the children in the Infirmary were handed over to other doctors; of the fate of his medical students nothing is known. Yet, although resumption of private practice increased his financial anxieties, it freed him from the many restrictions, both political and social, which Government service imposed. As a private citizen beholden to no man, he was able to widen his interests and speak out openly about the many things that concerned him. Consequently, the change in his attitude was immediate and very noticeable indeed; almost overnight Hall changed from the conscientious Government servant who was anxious to abide by the regulations to the outspoken medical and social reformer.

In April, 1855, Hobart Town presented many opportunities for criticism. In spite of the press campaign for improvement, rumours of corruption in the Convict Department were steadily increasing in number and intensity; the city was still unlighted; buildings, both public and private, reeked for want of ventilation; sewerage and drainage, indeed the whole problem of sanitation, were still matters for discussion rather than of action. Surely and steadily Hobart Town was falling

⁴ Hall, Reply to Testimonial, June 9, 1881 & G.O. 1/99/184.

further behind improvements taking place in Public Health in Britain and even in the sister colonies of Australia. Intelligent, enlightened citizens fretted loudly and impatiently at the slowness of official action to take corrective measures, and dreaded what might happen if nothing were done soon. At a Municipal Council meeting on February 23, even the Mayor showed some impatience at the lethargy of his colleagues:

..... When we call to mind that it is now an established fact, proved by a host of medical and scientific witnesses - that the presence of foul exhalations, whether arising from open cess pools or emanating from animal and vegetable impurities - from ill-ventilated and ill-regulated slaughter houses - want of water and want of cleanliness are such and all immediate causes and aggravations of disease and death; and that these evils are capable of being subdued or at least materially relieved by a system of efficient drainage, cleaning, ventilating and improving buildings and above all by a copious supply of pure water, I do hope this council will coincide with me in the importance of a full and correct survey and plan of the city and its adjacent districts being previously undertaken and that if requisite an experienced and practical engineer be exclusively engaged for that purpose.⁵

Habits die hard; in spite of disease and death in 1853 and 1854, goats and pigs in large numbers strayed about the streets in March 1855, and rubbish was tipped into the Rivulet which was the common Town sewer. Obviously, more personal, harsher, more insistent, more dramatic methods were called for if the necessary improvements were to take place. In April, 1855, a small group of Hobart Town men adopted this course. The group, composed of M. Miller, W. Milner, W. Robertson and several others, started a newspaper, the Tasmanian Daily News, of which Miller and Milner were the joint proprietors, with Milner as a sleeping partner and Miller as manager and editor. Although Robertson and the others assisted Miller to start the newspaper, all pecuniary profit, however large, went to Miller and his partner. In a letter which Robertson wrote to Miller on May 28, 1856, he clearly defined their intentions:

We had but one object in view, and that was by the establishment of a thoroughly independent and high spirited journal which would never flinch from speaking forth truthfully and fearlessly upon all occasions to sweep away those class distinctions and bitter jealousies which have been so long the bane and curse of this colony.⁶

⁵ Courier, February 26, 1855.

⁶ Tasmanian Daily News, May 28, 1856.

The first edition of the Tasmanian Daily News was published on May 14, 1855. Its editor, Miller, was described as "an intelligent and educated gentleman of courtly manners and refined and scholarly tastes". He was an Oxford graduate who had resigned college preferments of considerable value to come to Australia which he considered offered wider fields for enterprise than England did. After serving in Victoria as an Inspector of Schools, he came to Hobart Town. Although inexperienced in journalism, he soon proved his ability as an editor. In 1864 the Cornwall Chronicle described the Tasmanian Daily News as the most ably conducted and intelligent journal in Hobart Town.⁷ Milner, his associate, was a past secretary of the Mechanics Institute and the proprietor of the "Tasmanian Academy". As Supervisor of Trinity School, he was highly praised as a school's inspector by the Bishop. However, the two men did not maintain their partnership for very long; on September 20, 1855, Milner resigned from the Tasmanian Daily News to take over an estate agency, and Miller became sole proprietor.

It is impossible to say when Hall's association with Miller began. Both were members of the Mechanics' Institute and the Royal Society and probably met there. Obviously they had much in common. Certainly the two families were great friends; Anastasia, the youngest of the Hall family, treasured all her life the first letter she ever received. It remains as a symbol of the friendship existing between the two families.

My dear Mr Miller,

I am so glad you are coming home soon for I have been wishing it for such a long time. I am going to Papa's lecture on Thursday and I wish you were at home to go too.

I send you a hundred kisses,

I am
Your dear little friend,

Baby Hall.

Miller replied:

Brisbane Street,
Launceston,
Wednesday Morning.

My Dear Baby,

I was very much pleased to get your nice little note, and still more glad to hear that you say your lessons well every day. You must make haste and learn to write so that you will require no one to guide your hand but be able to

⁷ Cornwall Chronicle, May 5, 1864.

write to me all by yourself. Thank you for your promise to keep the pretty crocuses for me until my return. I shall be most glad to have them. I have done as you wished me and kissed the little baby for you but I shall wait for my own kisses until I can receive them myself. I don't much care for kisses on paper; so your thousand I shall in the meanwhile lie out at interest (Papa will explain what this means) and when I come back I shall hold you my debtor both for the original thousand and the interest accruing thereon. I did not mean to write such hard words, Baby, I must again tell you to ask Papa what they mean. Give my affectionate regards to your Papa, your Mama, your sisters and Thorpy,

and Believe me, dear Baby,
Your loving friend,

Maxwell Miller 8

The association, or more truly the partnership, which developed between Hall and Miller was interesting and significant; Miller, the journalist and newspaper proprietor, provided a sympathetic, understanding and stimulating vehicle for the dissemination of ideas; Hall, the professional medical man, the concern, the analysis and the solution to problems, all to the benefit of the community. Like most associations, it developed slowly, probably unintentionally; in the beginning both men had other aims and objects in view. On May 14, 1855, in his first editorial, Miller defined the idealism which led to the establishment of his newspaper.

In an old country the state of society is formed, its standard of morality is fixed; and although there exist numberless abuses, they are so inextricably bound up with its constitution, as to render their eradication almost an impossibility. In a new country this is not so. Upon the present generation hangs the future prosperity of Tasmania. They are, as it were, the fathers, ushering a nation into birth; and it is their high privilege so to invigorate its young life, as to render it ripe for any greatness that may ever fall to its share. Upon them it depends whether its civil and religious liberty be now established on too firm a basis for any storm hereafter to shake; whether institutions be formed which will obviate the necessity of reforming vice; by creating virtue, avoid the evils which necessarily spring from ignorance; by banishing ignorance itself put immorality to the blush by giving it the least possible cause for existence.

His campaign against social abuses, carefully and deliberately planned, began in the first issue which attacked the lodging houses for the poor. Persistently and meticulously, Miller described their condition, the present social consequences of their existence, their effect upon the

⁸ Hall Papers, NS 308/4/24.

young, and their contribution to the prevalence of disease; constructively, he drew attention to the measures being taken in England and called upon the Government, those owning capital, and other members of the Public to take action to combat the evil. So insistent were his efforts that on June 15 Archdeacon Davies convened a public meeting, at which Hall was present, to discuss the formation of a society to be called the "Hobart Town Model Lodging House Society" which would provide reasonable and comfortable accommodation both for the working man and the indigent portion of the community. At a second meeting on June 21 a prospectus was adopted and a capital of twenty thousand pounds in shares of twenty pounds each decided upon. Having effectively concentrated attention upon the lodging houses in which the Courier was now helpfully interested, Miller turned to another matter with even more dramatic effect. On May 18, the Tasmanian Daily News published its first editorial directed against the Convict Department.

Hall, for his part, was building up his private medical practice. Any leisure he had he devoted to one of his lifelong hobbies, his Biblical Collection, which he exhibited to the Public at his residence, Claremont House. The Collection, which included many rare and valuable editions in various languages dating back to early times, was enhanced by some ancient Bibles in Greek, Latin and English which were lent by a generous minded Protestant clergyman after the exhibition was advertised in the Colonial Times and the Tasmanian Daily News on May 15-19. By coincidence, therefore, Hall and the Convict Department were mentioned for the first time in the Tasmanian Daily News at the same time; in the next few months, Miller's determined efforts to eradicate social injustice welded their names together.

In his second attack, Miller openly accused the high officials of the Convict Department of gross acts of jobbery, which were long known and resented by the Public; of using their peculiar position to secure for their private profit the services of trained artisans from amongst prisoners, when labourers were refused to others; of carrying on an extensive commercial business and underselling the ordinary trader who was forced to pay a dearer price for the same labour; of speculating in the timber trade and procuring prisoner sawyers to carry on business when no one else could get them; of taking stone from Government quarries to use in private houses. Day after day, fiery editorials inveighing against the convict officials and calling for an investigation

rolled from Miller's eloquent pen until by May 24 the Public were thoroughly aroused.

As in the fairy tale of the slumbering princess our touch has started a sleeping public into most active life: and neither soon nor easily will their clamour for investigation be appeased or silenced.

Like Pandora we have thrown open the lid of the box of evils which have for years nestled so cosily and apparently so safely in every nook and cranny of the Convict Department.

On May 25 it was announced that Young had directed Hampton to reply to the charges of fraud, pecculation, and embezzlement in the use of convict labour and materials: Hampton himself; Lieutenant-Colonel Hamilton, the Visiting Magistrate; May, the Superintendent of the Penitentiary; and Boyd, the Superintendent at Port Arthur, were specifically named. Whilst awaiting the outcome of the enquiry, the city seethed with indignation; with the exception of the Examiner which applauded Miller's courage in attacking a decaying system, the rest of the press preferred to remain neutral, somewhat fearful for its own image if the charges were unfounded. Furthermore, the Governor, on the grounds of expediency, immediately withdrew any privileges previously exercised by convict officials with the exception of some on Tasman's Peninsula where they were considered essential to the welfare of officials' families. However, on July 4 the Governor-in-Council decided that the charges were not justified and that the officers concerned should be relieved from those imputations. Nevertheless, it was admitted that great abuses had existed for some time and that the officers implicated should be severely reprimanded. Although Young and the Executive Council took what steps they could to prevent further abuse, they did not make their decision public; nor were the officers removed from their official appointments, as both the Tasmanian Daily News and the Public would have liked. Naturally enough, Miller was angered and frustrated, the Public confused and unsatisfied, both unwilling to let the matter rest there.

Hall's antagonism towards the Comptroller-General had also increased as a result of recent events. Before his retirement on March 23 the number of convict women and children at the Hospital had increased to such an extent that more accommodation than the Infirmary offered was necessary. Jackson and Hall, therefore, agreed to transfer the women and children to the Male Hospital, and the male patients to the Infirmary. To that end a fence was erected at the back of the Hospital. At the beginning of June, Hall was horrified when he heard that, contrary

to these arrangements, the Comptroller-General had visited the Infirmary with a view to taking it over as a site for offices, and that the women and children were to be removed to the Brickfields. Although both he and Jackson protested verbally to the Principal Medical Officer that the locality was unsuitable, and that the children should not be placed again under the care of the convict authorities so far away from medical supervision, the removal was effected.

On July 12 and July 26, Hall returned to the lecture platform of the Mechanics Institute, following up his lectures of the previous winter session on "Hearing" and "Digestion" with one on "Respiration" delivered in two parts. These two lectures were important in that they marked the beginning of his work as a sanitarian and the self-appointed custodian of the community's health. By now he and Miller were firm friends; Miller described Hall as an

able and instructive lecturer who was already well known to the public as a clever and accurate speaker, both perspicuous and entertaining in a high degree, although using scientific and technical language.⁹

Hall spoke of Miller as "my worthy friend from the Daily News". To what extent Hall owed his new role to the driving influence of Miller and his associates it is not possible to say; certainly both men mutually benefited from the contact; Hall found a conscious purpose and a goal for his life's work plus a means by which they could be publicly expressed, Miller another worthwhile subject for his social interests and his newspaper columns. It was an ideal situation and both men took advantage of it; the result was a vigorous campaign in the Tasmanian Daily News in the interests of Public Health.

The maturing of their ideas provided a fascinating study. The first part of "Respiration" was given in the usual way and reported fairly briefly in the Tasmanian Daily News on July 13 in the fashion approved of for such subjects; the second part was treated differently: Hall, the Sanitarian, was reported verbatim at great length. Obviously, the two men realized the possibilities of the situation in the interval between the two lectures. Miller explained his attitude:

We deem the subject to be one of so great an importance to the community, that so clear and able an exposition of it must be productive of benefits to those who are sensible enough to read it carefully.

.... We do not as a rule devote so much of our space to the publication of literary matter, but we feel that this subject

⁹ Tasmanian Daily News, July 13, 1855.

has been so admirably dealt with, that the details are so skilfully simplified and that the whole has been made so generally interesting that our readers will be only grateful to us for deviating in this instance from the rule we usually adopt.

The important point was that Hall did not treat his subject purely from the point of view of the individual, as he had done in previous lectures when he confined himself to the obvious aspects of respiration - the anatomy of the respiratory organs, the composition of pure air as opposed to foul air, the diseases of the body due to poor respiration, the measures necessary to good health and the like - but broadened his approach to regard respiration as a problem of Public Health requiring immediate solution. It was all very well for the press to criticise an ignorant Public for its indifference to sanitary affairs; more than that was necessary; the city needed a guide and a teacher who knew the ultimate goal and the positive detailed techniques by which that goal could be achieved; moreover, it needed someone who had the courage and the determination to fight its Public Health battles against its own conservative opposition. In July, 1855, Hall, deliberately and voluntarily, took upon himself this time-consuming, financially unrewarding and thankless task in the interests of public welfare. That Miller played a part in his decision to tackle Public Health is revealed by his own words. Speaking of the poor ventilation of public buildings he said:

Let me point the subject more closely. Let me practice the advice of my worthy friend of the Daily News and select my example from the nearest source.

In fact this is what he did, drawing attention first to the unhealthy state of the room in which his audience was sitting, then widening his scope to include the churches, the very places where epidemic diseases can find their most ready means of dissemination, the burial grounds, schools and public buildings.

I do not draw your attention to this important but not very agreeable subject on light grounds. I do not wish to drive you away from such public meetings as these or indeed, anywhere you can improve or amuse a leisure hour. But I do wish you all to awake to the importance of combining and agitating incessantly until such defects are everywhere remedied.

After suggesting certain technical improvements to those responsible for the construction of buildings, he pleaded for more fresh air for those sleeping, and for less pollution of the atmosphere from drains and cesspools. Encouragingly, he praised the Municipal Council for its

efforts up to date but . .

a good and extensive system of drainage is the first desideratum, and with this there must be provision for a still more abundant supply of good water for every house.

He concluded with an attack on the "pernicious and offensive practice of tobacco smoking" so injurious to the healthy function of the lungs.

In July the opening of the first session of the Legislative Council under Young's administration gave the Public an opportunity to enquire further into the Convict Department Affair. On the 24th, in reply to questions from J.H. Wedge, the member for Morven, the Colonial Secretary stated that, although it was not customary for the Legislature to interfere between the Executive and its officers, as there was much public excitement over the question, he was prepared to disclose, for the benefit of all, that an investigation had been conducted and those officers concerned relieved from the charges, although severely reprimanded for some of their actions; there would be no further abuse of prison labour and the like. His disclosure was received with astonishment and anger; the Tasmanian Daily News declared that the charges should have been investigated in the Supreme Court or by a special commission, and accused the Governor of an "error of judgment" and "dilettante officialism"; the Examiner suggested the appointment of a Select Committee of the Legislative Council.

They have the sense of the public entirely in their favour, and the time has arrived to insist that every department is within the control of the Legislature.¹⁰

On August 4 this opinion was challenged by the Colonial Secretary who, in answer to further questions from Wedge, maintained that by answering he would be admitting the right of the House to review the proceedings of the Executive

a right which neither His Excellency was disposed to recognize nor for which he was sure would any member desire to contend.

However, on August 7 Wedge, determined, and firmly backed by an indignant Tasmanian Daily News and an excited Public, gave notice that he would move for the appointment of a Select Committee composed of Gregson, Chapman, Knight, Elliston, Kermode, Meredith, Gunn, Goodwin, Clarke, Douglas and Wedge to enquire into the charges brought against the Convict Department. The affair had now become a "question of privilege" with some members of the House reluctant to agree to Wedge's motion on

¹⁰ Examiner, July 31, 1855.

constitutional grounds, though morally in agreement. Nevertheless, the sixth paragraph of Wedge's motion,

to make other such enquiries into the abuses in the Convict Department, which may appear to affect the Colonial interest:

gave Miller the opening he needed. On August 8 and 10 he struck again at the Convict Department, this time with Hall's assistance, accusing it of the murder of convict children by treating them

in such a manner as to almost ensure their death for some faults of their mothers.

Since these children were native born citizens of the colony and, as such, demanded the interest and protection of the colonial legislature, it was no longer a political question of privilege but the right of the legislative assembly to watch over the community's welfare.

Although Hall discussed his findings at the Cascades Factory in 1854 with Miller, he, nevertheless, did not wish at first to become personally involved in the dispute and would not allow his statements to be used as evidence against the convict officials; but when he found that, in spite of his and Jackson's protests to the Principal Medical Officer, the mothers and children were moved to the Brickfields in June to enable portion of the Infirmary to be used as offices, and that, subsequently, in the space of several months, at least one quarter of the children died, eight in one week, he changed his mind. Consequently, on August 11, the Tasmanian Daily News devoted its editorial entirely to Hall's experiences at the Cascades Factory and accused the Comptroller-General of "reckless inhumanity".

Who will now declare that we have no right to ask for a committee to investigate the maladministration of the Convict Department. The lives of those who have actually sprung from our very soil have been sacrificed to heartless officialism.

When the vote was taken on August 14, Wedge's statement, that neglect and want of proper food and care had been responsible for the deaths of two to three hundred children within a comparatively short time and that this alone furnished ample cause for an enquiry, clinched the matter; the result was eighteen votes to six in favour.

The first meeting of the Committee of Convict Enquiry, with Sharland and Anstey as additional members, was held on August 17. From May 18 to this day more than thirty articles against the convict officials were written by the Daily News with no assistance whatsoever from the rest of the Hobart Town press. On August 21 the Legislative Council made a

move which was considered a false one by the Attorney-General, who thought the Legislature should act independently of the Governor and summon its own witnesses as in Great Britain; it presented an address to Young asking him to direct the attendance of officers at the Committee of Enquiry. This he declined to do in Message Number 12 on the grounds that penal establishments in Tasmania were under the sole control of the British Government which was responsible to the British Parliament and not to the Tasmanian Legislature.

A most important crisis has unexpectedly come upon the colony and it requires men possessed of cool minds and courageous hearts to deal with it. There can be no possible means of steering between two courses. The Governor has either treated the Legislative Council so cavalierly as to necessitate its adoption of firm and strenuous measures to assert its rights or their very existence is a farce and the chosen representatives of the people exist merely in our imagination.¹¹

The Convict Department Affair now assumed a completely different character; it was no longer a question of punishing certain convict officials for their delinquencies, but a question of the relationship between a Governor and those whom he governed. On August 28 the Council decided to assert its rights, claiming that it had perfect liberty to investigate all matters in which the welfare of the colony was involved, and to enquire into any department exercising directly or indirectly an influence upon the community, and that no person residing in the colony could be given independence of its laws. It therefore passed a resolution by a majority of eleven votes ordering the attendance of witnesses, thus enabling the Select Committee to send for persons and papers.

The constitutional battle which developed created great interest and excitement throughout the Australian colonies; in Hobart Town feelings ran very high indeed as the Public and the press sided either with the Governor or the Legislative Council, the Tasmanian Daily News for the Council, the Advertiser for the Governor's party. Consequently, the chief participants in the dispute rose to fame overnight; indeed the name of the ex-convict doctor, "Hall", became a household word.

On August 31 the Colonial Secretary was examined, followed by Hall on September 6. The following day the farce with all its drama and personal bitterness really began: Hampton was summoned to attend before the Select Committee but refused to comply and was ordered to

¹¹ Tasmanian Daily News, August 24, 1855.

attend at the Bar of the House on September 11; Hall's evidence before the Select Committee was published in the Hobart Town Advertiser in such a garbled fashion that he protested

Either a witless piece of burlesque, or the muddled effusion of some inebriated person;

in addition, he was accused of previously supplying to certain members of the Committee written copies of the questions he wished to be asked, an accusation which he immediately denied. The farce continued: as Hampton did not appear before the House on September 11, the Speaker issued a warrant for his arrest on the grounds of "contempt", which Hampton declared he would forcibly resist as it was illegal; sheriffs, bailiffs and constables were then ordered by the House to assist in his arrest. On the same day, the Advertiser continued its vicious campaign to discredit Hall by publishing official documents and correspondence connected with the Hickman Affair, some of which were unknown to Hall himself; letters written by Hampton and Denison were included. In its introduction the Advertiser wrote:

We submit the following correspondence in relation to the inhuman treatment of Prisoners of the Crown without any other comment than an expression of regret that Dr Hall's statements should have necessitated the public exposure of such gross cases of barbarity and cruelty as the following officially authenticated facts indicate. We make no comment upon the facts - they speak for themselves and but too truly realize our ideas as to the policy of colonial management.

However the Advertiser's charge of inhumanity was immediately rebutted the next day by Hall in the Daily News which, for good measure, added the story of Hampton's servant, dying of consumption in the Colonial Hospital, for whom Hall had bought strawberries at three shillings per quart to satisfy his craving when his master neglected to do so. On September 13, the attempts by the Sergeant-at-Arms to arrest Hampton were foiled by the Governor who gave instructions to the Chief Police Magistrate and the Sheriff to give no assistance until the legality of the warrant was determined upon by the Law officers of the Crown. The following day, Hampton's proposal to surrender to the Sergeant-at-Arms at his own house was repudiated by the Council who demanded that he come before the Bar of the House. So intense was the excitement in the city that the Governor became alarmed and sent the following message:

The officer commanding the troops or the Senior Officer present is hereby requested and authorized without unnecessary display to hold the military force in readiness in case of need to aid

the civil power of the Chief Police Magistrate and the Police Force to prevent any breach of the peace on or upon the persons or premises of any of Her Majesty's subjects in Hobart Town or its vicinity.

H.E.F. Young,
Sept. 14th 1855.

The Chief Police Magistrate was similarly advised to be ready with the Police Force. Never in its fifty odd years of existence had Hobart Town known such a dramatic moment. On September 15, the Executive Council met twice to consider what steps to take. Hampton, too, was alarmed and begged the Governor's protection:

The Legislative Council having last night decided that I am to be arrested and brought to the Bar of the House under a warrant of the Speaker which the Law Officers of the Crown have declared to be altogether an unlawful proceeding, I have now the honor to submit to your Excellency my apprehension that some attempt may be made under the assumed authority of such a warrant, forcibly to enter my house for the purpose of arresting me and that further from what occurred yesterday in the shape of gatherings of disorderly persons in various parts of the Town and in the immediate neighbourhood of my private residence, my house and property may be exposed to the risk of serious damage and that I am therefore compelled to request that under these circumstances you will be pleased to grant me an assurance that I shall receive such protection from the government¹²

However, Hampton's proposal that he surrender to the Sergeant-at-Arms at his own house was accepted by the Council the next day. He immediately sued a writ of "habeas corpus" against the Speaker and the Sergeant-at-Arms. The same afternoon the Solicitor-General advised the Executive Council that the warrant was illegal. Without waiting for the judgment of the Supreme Court, which was sitting on September 19, the Governor took the advice of his Executive and decided to prorogue the Legislative Assembly. On September 18, exactly at half past nine in the evening, the Governor's Aide-de-Camp appeared at the Bar of the House and announced the Governor's presence. Immediately, Sir Henry entered in full uniform, accompanied only by his Aide-de-Camp and Private Secretary. As the members rose to their feet, he moved to the Speaker's dias and, amidst a stunned silence, prorogued the council until October 20, thus making the Speaker's warrant null and void. It was a fitting end to eleven days of highly-charged emotion, dramatic episodes and constitutional and legal argument.

¹² Minutes of the Executive Council, 1855, E.C. 4/9, 10.

Although the Governor's peremptory action effectively silenced any further political opposition for the time being, bitter and rancorous debate continued in some sections of the press; as neither side could claim victory, the fighting went on, quickly developing into a personal conflict between Hall, supported by the Daily News, and the friends of the Comptroller-General, aided by the Advertiser - a conflict in which Hall's own character, reputation and professional integrity were soon at stake, calling for all the courage, determination and argumentative ability he possessed to defend them.

From September 12 to September 19 the Advertiser published a number of communications from various convict officials - J.M. May, G. Drew, Doctors Benson, Brock, Secombe and others - all aimed at confusing and refuting Hall's evidence before the Select Committee; the Daily News was accused of raising a "cry of murder" and using "the hostile evidence of a discontented and litigious ex-official convict surgeon"; Hall's evidence was called "the fallacious murder imaginations of the Just Doctor". All these, plus the publication of the Hickman Affair documents, were answered by Hall in numerous lengthy letters to the Daily News in which he detailed for the benefit of the Public his experiences at Ross, Saltwater River, and the Cascades Factory. On September 18 he wrote:

In the whole history of official meanness, cowardice and treachery throughout the world, I do not think you can find a parallel instance to that exhibited in the columns of the Advertiser of the 11th instant.¹³

The temper of his feelings was revealed in his reply to a private anonymous letter which informed him of the name of his libeller, J.D. Balfe, who was then living at Boa Vista.

I daresay the information here conveyed is quite true, but of what use is it to me, without the informant has the moral courage to come forward openly and prove his assertions. I hate anything anonymous. Whatever a man dares to do, let him do openly. I was reluctant enough to undertake the medical charge of the wretched children at the Cascades, but when I did undertake it, though "instant dismissal" hung over my head (see reprimand in Saltwater River Case) or a long exile to Norfolk Island loomed in the distance, I never shrank from the promptings of conscience, or the path of duty ...

Declaring that his informer must be an Irishman, he wrote

.... Let me remind him that the sad history of his unhappy country reveals that the secret system, the base spy, the hireling informer, the perjured traitor, the trader in patriotism has been its curse; has made her the "Niobe of Nations".

¹³ Tasmanian Daily News, September 18, 1855.

Let my correspondent scorn such hateful examples; let him despise the tactics of the men he exposes; let him dare to risk the paltry appointment he may hold, for the sacred cause of truth, humanity and justice. The whole incubus of the corrupt convict system must soon be scattered to the four winds of heaven. Let him throw himself upon his adopted country and openly and honourably avow and make good his assertions. Let him act upon my axiom

"Whatever betide; for the right".¹⁴

Refusal of access to official documents, insults, even the threat of physical violence were all suffered by Hall, now advanced in years and of feeble health - by one whom Miller described as "a gentle humane man" and

as honourable a man as ever breathed and as skilful a medical practitioner as ever saved by unremitting assiduity a patient from the very brink of death.¹⁵

Hall's evidence, however, was corroborated in a letter, written by A. Finlay of Brighton to the Chairman of the Select Committee which detailed the case of Emily Aylwood, aged ten months, on whom an inquest had been held at Green Ponds on May 28, 1852. Although the child's healthy appearance was remarked upon at the time of the mother's sentence, the Coroner's verdict on the child's death a few days after their liberation was

died from natural causes, having caught cold or some other illness, being at the time in confinement with her mother in the Female House of Correction, Hobart Town, superinduced by the dampness of the cell in which the mother and the infant were at first confined, and the want of sufficient nourishment during the period of three months they were so confined in the Female Factory.

At the request of the jury the Coroner, G.B. Forster, concluded his verdict with the hope that such treatment and neglect would not be tolerated in future; in reply, he was informed that the charges were groundless, and that in future he should be cautious in making statements, prejudicial to the officers of that establishment, that could not be supported by facts.¹⁶

By September 24 both Hall and his opponents came to the conclusion that no useful purpose was served by bickering at one another in the press; decisive factual evidence alone was able to prove the

¹⁴ Tasmanian Daily News, September 21, 1855.

¹⁵ Tasmanian Daily News, September 24 & October 20, 1855.

¹⁶ Tasmanian Daily News, September 20, 1855.

guilt or otherwise of the convict officials; both sides, therefore, resorted to statistics to prove their point. On the 24th, the Tasmanian Daily News published a simple table of comparative deaths of children during the first six months of 1854 at the Cascades Factory, and of the last six months of 1854 at the Infirmary. This table showed that, had the deaths at the Infirmary continued in the same relative proportion to strength as at the Cascades, forty six children instead of eleven would have died; consequently, in the last six months of 1854, thirty five lives were saved. Therefore, if the children had been placed under the same improved management from July 1, 1852, to July 1, 1854, instead of 228 deaths, there would have been only 57 - that is, 170 lives or more would have been saved. Hall explained:

These are no trifling figures, it is not a slight difference; the saving of lives in the proportion of more than three out of four; and no amount of certificature, sophistry or mystification can nullify such palpable facts and persuade the public that my single judgment was not more correct than that of Drs Secombe, Benson and Brock and that there was something radically wrong in the management of the children, under Mr May's superintendence.

The next day, the Advertiser inserted an article by M. Burgess, the son of the Chief Police Magistrate, formerly Clerk of the Medical Department and now Assistant Inspector of Schools and Secretary to the Mechanics Institute, who claimed that he had a long and intimate personal knowledge of the circumstances. In his review of Hall's evidence before the Select Committee, he, too, used statistics to prove that the mortality rate at the Cascades Factory in the first six months of 1854, 64 deaths out of a total number of 209 children, or at the rate of 43.6% per annum, was no higher than in England or in Europe for children of the same age. Moreover, he denied that the Comptroller-General and the Medical Department had ever been neglectful of the children's welfare, as regards food, clothing, warmth, and accommodation; the improved condition of the children after their removal to the Infirmary he attributed to the superior position of the buildings, the more extended means of exercise, and the freedom of the mothers from the restraints of a gaol; Atkinson alone and not the Comptroller-General was responsible for their removal to the Brickfields. Hall he accused of "personal malice" and "an urgent thirst for popularity" coupled with "egotism, vanity and self laudation", all of which were so noticeable in his correspondence. Though Hall replied at some length, the Daily News made one scathing comment:

It is always pitiable to see a man of amiable temperament, of comparatively guileless life, made the unwitting tool and blind instrument of the dark machinations and fraudulent acts of some malignant and more commanding intellect.¹⁷

By the beginning of October, opinion varied considerably as to who held the advantage in the Convict Department dispute; in Tasmania and in Melbourne public meetings were held to express sympathy and gratitude to the Legislative Council members who had bravely struggled for constitutional rights and privileges in the face of dictatorial officialism; the Sydney Morning Herald praised Hall for revealing the secrets of the prison house at last; a petition from the residents of Hobart Town to the Governor to dismiss his advisers was foiled by Sir Henry on the grounds of ill health; and a congratulatory dinner to the Representative members of the Legislative Council was arranged for November 18, the day before the Council was due to meet again, after being prorogued twice, on September 18 and October 20. Certainly, the Governor considered the dispute finished; on November 12, he wrote to the Colonial Secretary, Sir William Molesworth,

I have only to add that the refutations of Dr Hall's statements which they (documents) contain, appear to me to be satisfactory and conclusive.¹⁸

But the Comptroller-General obviously thought otherwise. As far as he was concerned, the mere holding of the enquiry was condemnation enough. On November 15 he applied to the Governor for "leave of absence" on the grounds of ill-health, after more than nine years

of unremitting application to the discharge of my highly responsible and harrassing official duties.

Four days later he applied to the Executive Council from Sydney for eighteen months leave to enable him to visit Europe, a period of time sufficient to prevent him ever returning to Tasmania within the term of his office.¹⁹ Indeed, the Public were tired of the Convict Department Affair; their sentiments were ably expressed by a correspondent to the Advertiser on November 19:

I am inclined to think the colony has been more deteriorated by the rumpus about the Comptroller-General than the enquiry into his conduct has been beneficial. The colonial brain has been in a manner turned and confused and incapacitated

¹⁷ Tasmanian Daily News, September 28, 1855.

¹⁸ G.O. 33/83/482.

¹⁹ Minutes of the Executive Council, 1855, EC 4/9.

to consider those great works the colony needs. Where is the railway from Hobart Town to Launceston but almost passed to oblivion and the same may be said of many other great works of great public utility.

It was time for more constructive things; but, first, final vindication of Miller's and Hall's efforts on behalf of convict children had to come. For many weeks past, day after day, Hall had visited the Registrar's office to examine the various returns for the last five years and condense them into tables; the result was a massive effort of research and scholarship, occupying twelve columns, a complete central double page, in the Daily News, which dispelled for all time any arguments, such as those of Burgess, against the veracity of his statements. In delight and satisfaction, Miller wrote in his editorial of the same day,

all honour be to him for his studious attention to the causes which led to the wanton sacrifice of these unfriended infant lives. All honour be to him for putting a check upon the mortality which has so long prevailed and which, in fact, only demanded one to point out the evils of the system previously pursued and to demand its reformation.²⁰

The Advertiser admitted defeat.

We were overwhelmed with the weight of the twelve columned letter of Dr Hall, inserted in the Daily News of Monday. The close array of lines which crammed its pages - the elaborate tables - the apparent universality of investigation which it displayed, all conspired to impose upon us an awful dread of its perusal. It seemed a letter to be read when sleep was reluctant to visit one's eyelids; and judging from the effect produced upon ourselves, it will not belie its appearance.²¹

It is impossible to discuss all the details of Hall's letter published in the Daily News on November 19, 1855, owing to its size and weight; briefly, he argued that, out of 317 children passing through the nurseries of the Cascades Factory in 1851 and averaging less than four months residence for each, 93 died, or about 30% of the whole, and rather more than 1/3 of all the deaths under three years of age in the district including the nurseries themselves. Out of 2,403 children in the district of the same age, 166 died, or less than 7% and less than 1/14 of the whole number of children. As the district deaths included all casualties from fire, drowning, accident and various diseases, the mortality rate at the Factory, where such eventualities did not apply, was enormous. Discussing the mortality rate 1851-1854, he maintained that

²⁰ Tasmanian Daily News, November 19, 1855.

²¹ Advertiser, November 23, 1855.

he had seen nothing worse, even in the cellar dens of Liverpool which were famous as the most destructive to infant life in Great Britain.

With the unlimited means at the command of the convict authorities, as regards lodgings, ventilation, cleanliness, food, clothing, artificial warmth, nursing, medical attendance, in many of which a great part of the population at large is so ill provided, I cannot see any valid grounds on which the mortality in the convict nurseries should not be greatly below, instead of so much above, that of the district.

Hall indeed was confident that the class of children in the convict nurseries could be preserved by proper management in a better state of health than that of the population at large.

Despite all the personal bitterness he suffered, Hall, with Miller's staunch and never-failing support, achieved the object for which he fought. On November 19 the Daily News jubilantly reported that in the last three months a great reform had taken place in the management of the children; the number of deaths had dwindled away; no longer was the life of a helpless convict child trifled with and uncared for. During the next few months the various issues connected with the Convict Department Affair were gradually solved. A new Bill, designed to render guilty any person refusing to attend at the Bar of the House or before a Select Committee, was laid before the Legislative Council on November 28 by the Governor who hoped in this way to prevent any further disturbance to the peace. On January 21, 1856, Hall was summoned to give evidence at the 'Committee of Convict Enquiry' which had been reappointed on December 4. As it was the Governor's intention to dissolve the Legislative Council on January 29 and the last witness was called on January 21, the Committee was given little time to prepare its report, although the subject of its enquiry had occupied the attention of the Public for most of 1855. The report, which was laid before the House by Wedge on January 25, satisfied no one since it expressed no opinion on the charges made and was careful not to blame anyone. Hampton, it was discovered some years later, was exonerated from all blame by the British Government, financially recompensed, and appointed Comptroller-General in Western Australia. However, the British Government's decision on the "question of privilege" delighted those, like Miller, who had fought strenuously for their constitutional rights. On February 1, 1856, Colonial Secretary Labouchere wrote to the Governor:

I cannot but think you were wrong in originally objecting to an enquiry by a Committee of the Legislative Council into the state of the Convict Establishment. It appears to me that a Body constituted for the purpose of making laws binding on the whole community of Tasmania must possess the ancillary, and almost inseparable, right of enquiry into all subjects of public interest. The anticipation that such an enquiry might lead to interference with matters placed, from peculiar circumstances, beyond the control of the local authorities, could afford no substantial reason for resisting a proceeding within the strict rights of the Council.²²

On May 3, 1856, he confirmed this opinion:

....you will inform the Legislative Council, that Her Majesty's Government consider that their right of enquiry into alleged abuses in the Convict Department should have been admitted.²³

²² H.A.P., 1856/8 p. 8.

²³ H.A.P., 1856/9, p. 13.

CHAPTER 10

PUBLIC HEALTH

The tempestuous events of 1855 changed in various ways the lives of many people: Young was censured by the British Government; Hampton was gone, his place taken by the former Deputy Comptroller-General W. Nairn; the convict infants were better cared for. "The days of tyranny and mawkish sensibility have passed away", wrote Miller, whose journal was well-established, financially viable and popular. The dissolution of the Legislative Council on February 7, 1856, and the preparations for the election of a representative parliament under the new constitution affirmed the feeling that a new era had begun.

Hall, too, was affected by his experiences in that momentous year: his courage and determination to expose the evils of the convict system were recognized and acclaimed, whilst his reputation as a resolute and fearless fighter on behalf of the weak and helpless had spread throughout Australia and to England. Of more importance was the increase in the breadth and depth of his knowledge and interests as the result of his intense efforts during the stormy days of 1855 to prove his argument. The necessity to do this publicly turned his attention to research and writing, both of which he found stimulating and satisfying. As a legacy of the many hours he spent in the Registrar's office investigating returns and compiling tables of statistics, he developed an absorbing interest in the science of "Vital Statistics", which induced him to become a member of the Statistical Society of London, although the exact date of his election is not known. Moreover, his studies necessitated extensive research into many other fields of scientific enquiry - sanitation, public health, nutrition, penology, meteorology, climatology, medical topography and the like. Indeed, Hall's interest in statistics and meteorology was the basis of a life-long friendship and scientific co-partnership which sprang up between him and F. Abbott, the Registrar General. Abbott, who

was described by Hall as a "very able and pains-taking meteorologist", was in charge of a valuable set of instruments belonging to the Royal Society to which body he furnished returns. The alliance, too, between Hall and Miller was confirmed and strengthened during the bitter times of 1855; neither man failed in his support of the other and both rejoiced at the outcome of their mutual effort. Now, at the beginning of 1856, confident in their knowledge of what was being done in England and Europe, and acutely aware of the deficiencies of Hobart Town in matters of Public Health and Sanitation, they looked forward to a year of purposeful effort in health and social reform.

Actually, the health situation was just as fraught with danger as it ever was, perhaps even more so. In spite of the efforts of the municipal authorities to improve the sanitary condition of the city, there were still local wants and defects in the water supply, whilst bad drainage, nuisances, cesspools, overcrowding, lack of ventilation abounded everywhere. Far more serious and frightening was the possibility in April of an epidemic of smallpox brought by the many ships arriving from Mauritius where the disease had broken out with dire results in the early part of 1856. Although the Government Health Officer in Launceston insisted that he make a medical inspection of all vessels arriving there from the infected country, no such precautions were taken in Hobart Town where there was complete apathy to the situation; indeed, it was not certain who the Government Health Officer was, so negligent was he in his duties. Although the Legislative Council in 1853 passed the Vaccination Act which made vaccination compulsory for all children up the age of fourteen years, it was, nonetheless, inoperative, not a single conviction under the act having taken place in the island; consequently, the younger members of the Public were completely unprepared for an epidemic. In its first long editorial on "Public Health" on April 30 (written by Hall), the Daily News criticised the existing act and suggested that public-paid vaccinators be appointed to every district, with the right to make house to house visitations and issue certificates of vaccination.¹ Fortunately, after further complaints at the lack of quarantine precautions, the Government appointed a new Health Officer for the port of Hobart Town, W. Benson, to succeed the former officer, E.S.P. Bedford.²

¹ Tasmanian Daily News, April 30, 1856.

² Gazette, May 13, 1856.

On May 13, Hall lectured again at the Mechanics' Institute on the "Structure and Functions of the Human Voice", a lengthy review of which occupied the editorial columns of the Daily News on May 15. Such a prominent publication of this lecture was an indication of the extent to which Miller and Hall were involved in matters pertaining to health. Once again Hall extended his subject beyond the customary limits to dwell rather ironically upon the dangers of alcoholic drinking. Speaking of a man upon whose throat he had once operated after an attempted suicide caused by alcoholism, he said:

The last home of his mortal remains is in the burying ground of the Bothwell Church - a speaking monument and an instructive monitor to those who would seek to know the end of the drunkard, and sorry am I to say, that a vast proportion of his neighbours there in their "narrow houses", have been untimely hurried there by the same merciless foe to health, happiness and life. In this general clime, drunkenness is, as yet, either directly or indirectly almost the only enemy to long and vigorous existence the Tasmanians have to contend with. But for this insatiable destroyer, my profession would be almost a sinecure.

The next day, the Daily News celebrated the first anniversary of its birthday with a forceful reiteration of its principles - independence of opinion and truthfulness, allied with "unswerving integrity, steady perseverance and unmoved fixity of purpose in asserting truth and demanding justice for all".

In July, 1856, Hall's new scientific approach to problems of Public Health, based on objective statistical enquiry, found expression in an article, "On the Medical Topography and Vital Statistics of the City of Hobarton, Tasmania, and its Southern Sub-Districts, for 1855", which was published in four separate parts, in July and October 1856, in April 1857 and in April 1858 respectively, in the Australian Medical Journal, the organ of the Medical Society of Victoria which was founded in 1855. The article was carefully written, lucid, comprehensive, detailed - one of the best descriptions of Hobarton written in the nineteenth century; but it was also much more than that. It was an attempt by Hall to do for Hobart Town what men like Doctors Forbes, Shapter and Hastings and the "Health of Towns" Commissioners did for various cities and towns in England - to make a comprehensive, statistical study of the city so that it could be compared with other cities in England and Europe, and the results of any future sanitary reforms assessed. Pointing out that the science of vital statistics had assumed a new and most important aspect, he wrote:

Every addition to our store of knowledge in medical topography and vital statistics is now received with favour by the medical and scientific world, and I feel certain that my humble but painstaking effort to enlarge its sphere regarding a colony in which I have been a practitioner for twenty-three years will be duly appreciated.

By Hall's deliberate effort, the questions of Sanitation and Public Health in Hobart Town became matters of world-wide scientific discussion, investigation and comparison; isolation and ignorance were no longer an excuse for indifference, apathy and neglect on the part of its inhabitants. It was an immense step forward.

In detail, Part One of the article which was published hardly before the echoes of the Convict Department dispute had died away, was almost startling in its revelation of Hall's growing concentration on and devotion to Sanitation and Public Health, indicating quite definitely the fearful shock he had received from his investigations into the mortality rates of Hobart Town. For one who had been in continuous residence in Tasmania for twenty-three years and had not once left its shores, his attitude was particularly objective and impartial, his opinions considered, fearless and outspoken, the product of intense study and application. Consequently, the Municipal authorities and the residents were left in no doubt of the true state of their city: the lack of ventilation in private homes, churches, schools, public buildings such as the Court House and the Legislative Assembly room; uncontrolled building, and the overcrowding of houses - all were condemned.

In the progress we are making, we bid fair to rival some of the great pest-spots of London, Liverpool, Glasgow, Dublin etc.

Continuing, he described the open cess-pools and privies abounding everywhere; the masses of filth only partially removed; the private slaughter houses emitting their noisome stench; the eight burial grounds within the precincts of the city

silently but incessantly giving forth those gaseous products of decomposition, which no coffers of wood, or even lead, can contain;

the dense volumes of carbonaceous compounds belching forth from the chimneys of breweries, and soap and candle factories polluting the atmosphere; the need for public urinals in the principal streets for the sake of health and decency; even the water supply which, though basically pure, was neither sufficient nor well-managed. Sarcastically, he

criticised Denison for his remark that

... dirt of this kind (i.e. human excrement) is not unwholesome, instance the Thames water which is said to be the best in the world.

This first general section of Hall's article concluded with a reference to the "Report of the General Board of Health on the supply of water to the metropolis of England" from which he quoted in support of his conclusions. This practice of introducing the notable reports of overseas Boards and Commissions on Public Health in support of his argument here employed for the first time, became an important and essential procedure in his efforts to enlighten and educate official authorities and the Public.

Although Part One of Hall's article was highly commended by the Victorian press, the Daily News in its review on July 26 greatly regretted that an article of such importance and immediate interest to Tasmanians should have its value frittered away by being published piecemeal; publication in pamphlet form, as Dr Mackin of Geelong did in a similar work, "Report on the Health and Sanitary Conditions of the Town and Suburbs of Geelong, 1856", was preferable; otherwise, the Daily News warmly recommended the article to its readers:

From Dr Hall's extended experience both in Europe and this colony, from his well-known indomitable zeal in every matter relating to public health, from his persevering research in collecting statistical and other data in support of the deductions he draws as to the low sanitary condition of this city, in one of the finest climates in the world - the public at large may expect much valuable knowledge. That he should lay it before his professional brethren for criticism or correction is proof alike of his candor, and the confidence he feels that his conduct will not be misjudged, beyond the sphere of religious and personal prejudices so unhappily prevailing in this, as in most other small communities.

On July 3 the Daily News began a long series of articles on Sanitation and Public Health in Hobart Town which were designed to emphasize to the Public, forcibly and irrefutably, the alarming state of the city, and to enlighten it to the measures urgently required to combat this condition. Although these articles were published as editorials, the type of content used and the style of presentation were unmistakably Hall's, indicating that he, as their author, and Miller were working in close cooperation.

In fact, education of the Public in health, as well as in many other matters, was essential at this time, for the institution of representative government afforded opportunities for reform and

improvement which could not be missed, provided the Public was knowledgeable and responsible enough to elect those persons best suited to legislate on its behalf. But, as many informed people knew, the gap between the reality of the moment and the desired standard was wide indeed, and needed much effort to bridge, as evinced in a letter to the Daily News from a correspondent in northern Tasmania on June 30. According to this writer, the situation in medicine in 1856 was chaotic, requiring the immediate establishment of new laws for its practice, and for sanitary rules and regulations throughout the colony. Under the present Medical Practitioners' Act, there was no real protection to the Public or to the Medical Profession against uneducated quacks and imposters, against the sale of unadulterated drugs and medicines, against the indiscriminate sale of harmful so-called "patents": as far as sanitary laws were concerned, there were none to guard against the introduction and spread of contagious disease. As it was, the Public was being deceived by false documents proving medical skill; the Medical Profession itself was apathetic and internally uncooperative, and there existed no body, such as the Victorian Medical Society, to present its just claims. To remedy this appalling situation, the writer made many suggestions for new legislation, amongst which were a new Medical Practitioners' Act, the revision of the Coroners' Act, laws for the preservation of Public Health and modifications to the present Vaccination Act.

The Daily News began its educational programme on July 3 with an introductory editorial on Public Health in which it sought to disprove the argument that

What is everybody's business is nobody's business.

On the grounds of humanity, self-preservation, community welfare, and financial stability, Public Health was very much everybody's business, but it was almost universally neglected both by the Government and the Public, due to a kind of fatalism prevailing in the community.

Now and then we may have a few ardent individuals - the medical practitioners here, as everywhere else, leading the van - perseveringly drawing public attention to the vast extent of remediable and preventable disease and mortality inflicted upon us by neglect of the most simple laws of hygiene. But we are utterly devoid of any scientific or comprehensive measures adopted by legislative enactment, or carried out by executive enforcement.

The Public wrongfully blamed private neglect of the laws of health for the prevalence of disease, and were unwilling to allow meddling

legislation to interfere with their independence. Emphatically, the editorial pointed out that people did not, and could not, understand the truth of the situation: in spite of the fine climate and the abundance of good food, the mortality rate was greater in Hobart Town than it ought to be, and greater than it was elsewhere. In England, if the death rate exceeded 23 in each 1000 of the population, under the enactment of the English Health Act, the Central Board of Health was empowered to appoint immediately a commission to visit the spot, investigate the cause of what was considered to be an excessive amount of mortality, initiate a local Board of Health, and take any other steps that were necessary to improve the health of the place and reduce its mortality to the ascertained mean standard. Moreover, in England, the Registrar-General had shown that the mean annual rate of mortality for the ten years ending December 31, 1854, was 2,284 per 100,000, or less than 23 in the 1,000. In 1855 it was only 2,269 out of every 100,000. Comparing the death rate in Hobart Town, the Daily News declared that, in 1855, the number of deaths were 775 out of a population of 26,095; therefore, the mortality rate was within a trifle of 30 in the 1,000 or above 25% more than what was estimated as an excessive mortality for England. In the years previous to 1855, it had been even higher - in 1852, 864 deaths,

in 1853, 1,073

in 1854, 937

a truly alarming situation; at least one third to one half of these deaths were preventable.

Do not such facts, even in a commercial point of view, the lowest of all, render it imperative upon us to put into operation the various provisions of the English Health Act without a day's delay. Yet, with such wholesale and costly destruction as this annually of our population, our supine Government stirs not. It is indeed prodigal of treasure to introduce immigrants, but is innocent of the most trifling expenditure to preserve the more valuable population we already possess.

With the appalling health situation in Hobart Town statistically established beyond dispute, the Daily News in its second editorial in the series on July 9, discussed the causes of the excessive mortality, concentrating firstly on impure air. In accordance with the commonly accepted theory of the time that air fouled by the nauseous gases of decomposing organic matter was the basic cause of disease, it made a scathing attack on the filthy state of the city.

Already this young city rivals, in these respects, the worst examples recorded in the published documents of the English Sanitary Commissions.

Recalling the dry spring and summer of 1853-54 when 230 people died of scarlet fever, the editorial warned that a similar epidemic could be expected if the same weather conditions occurred. Drainage was the first essential; the only sewers at present in existence were those which continued the natural water courses beneath streets and houses; none showed constructive skill; egg-shaped, glazed stoneware sewers were necessary - up to the present time not one of these was to be found in Hobart Town.

Our sewers at present are in fact but elongated cesspools of the most noxious character to the health of the citizens. The gases engendered there have free exit into our streets and houses, for no doors or locks can exclude so subtle and stealthy an enemy. We do not know one gully hole in the city provided with a stench trap. House drainage, so essential to cleanliness, comfort and health, is so rare that it may be said not to exist.

Tubular pipes of glazed earthenware for house drainage, water closets instead of the "disgusting privies", and a constant supply of water to every house at high pressure were recommended.

But the town creek in its present state was the worst enemy of all. With words which quivered with disgust and accusation the editorial described the Rivulet in 1856:

Of all existing nuisances inimical to the public health, the rivulet or town creek in its present state is the greatest. Nature has done much to fit it for the main sewer - the 'cloaca maxima' of a great city, by which all waste water and offensive and deleterious matter might be quietly and easily got rid of and in the deep ocean be buried. Self-interest, ignorance and folly have done much to prevent so desirable a result. Its channel has been obstructed, and depositing beds of the most noxious and disgusting matters, provided in the very midst of us. The contents of privies, dead cats, dogs, fish offal, tan yard refuse, drainage of stables, cow houses, pigstyes, and all sorts of vegetable garbage, combined with surface mud, contribute their quota to the horrible mass. From this worse than witch's cauldron the elements of disease are constantly distilling and with every puff of wind are disseminated far and wide.

From the Female Factory to the Gas Works, the Rivulet was an abomination - the masses of filth arrested by the boulder shores; the wide and deep bed of mud saturated with the refuse of the slaughter house near Macquarie Street Bridge; and, above all, the dams erected across the whole width of the stream above Harrington and Barrack Street Bridges. When it came to the dams, one of which had no sluice, with mud flush to

the top of the walls and extending far up the creek, words almost failed the writer:

The one terrible fact that occurred on the very brink of this pestilent dam ought to have been a sufficient warning. A whole family of children - five in number - were here destroyed by the scarlet fever epidemic. Four of them were buried out of that house in one day.

With intensity and emotion the Daily News pleaded with the Public to take warning before it was too late. If an epidemic of smallpox or cholera occurred, it would be "Woe betide the filthy city of Hobarton".

From July 17 until October 18, the Daily News published eight more 'leading' articles dealing with various aspects of Public Health, including scavenging of the city, extra-mural interment, water supply and the provision of fountains and baths, nuisances in the Rivulet, unwholesome and adulterated food and the like.³ Much of the material was repetitive, emphasizing again and again the connection between cleanliness and health on the one hand, and dirt and disease on the other: exhortation, persuasion, ironical humour, scientific argument, appeal to religious sentiment, even the recounting of revolting and gruesome details, were used to drive the lesson home; certainly nothing was left to the public imagination. To the stranger who saw only the best streets in Hobart Town, the Daily News issued a challenge.

But let him drive into the bye-streets, where the dwellings of the poor may be seen; let him take a daily round with the town missionaries in their house to house visitation of the domiciles of the labouring classes; let him accompany the medical practitioners in their visits, at all hours and in all seasons to the abodes of pestilence and disease; or let him accompany the zealous minister of the Great Prototype, whose mission was to go about doing good and whose doctrine teaches us to visit the sick and the widows and the fatherless in their afflictions; and he will soon have ample grounds to pronounce an adverse opinion - and wonder how in so young, so wealthy, so active a community the worst evils of the old established, close packed cities of the Northern Hemisphere could have grown up under the bright skies, genial influences and ample space of the south.

The reforms advocated, whilst inferring the grimness of the sanitary situation, were an illustration of the wide extent of Hall's knowledge of the most advanced sanitary principles of the day. Amongst the numerous reforms he suggested were the provision of paid men with carts, pipes, hoses and rakes to clean the vast accumulations of refuse organic matters from every nook and cranny in the city; the

³ See list of Hall's newspaper articles on Public Health in the Bibliography.

establishment of a new cemetery on a peninsula in the Sandy Bay area;
the use of charcoal for packing round corpses -

....it will absorb the fluids and prevent such horrible
sights as have been witnessed in the streets of Hobart Town;

the use of glazed earthenware or strong green glass for pipes (lead to
be avoided); the building of fountains at every turn to purify the air;
the construction of large high reservoirs to enable water to be piped to
the highest storey in a tenement; the establishment of public baths so
that

....the weary and begrimed labourer or mechanic would
readily take at least weekly a cleansing, refreshing
salutary bath, hot or cold.Surely it is a disgrace
to this city under its more sunny influences and with its
upwards of 20,000 inhabitants that such a provision has
not long-since been made here. In such a climate bathing
becomes not only a luxury but almost a necessity. The
few sea sheds for cold sea-bathing at Sandy Bay are
miserably inadequate for a community like this. We
ought to have baths - hot, cold, vapor and medicated,
shower, slipper and swimming - of sea water and fresh water,
numerous and cheap enough to be accessible to all

Needless to say, these ten articles were a fascinating
indictment of Hobart Town in 1856 and the urge to quote at length is
almost irresistible. However, to many residents of the city the
subject of Public Health was a bore which aroused their impatience and
annoyance; Hall was accused of being a very well-meaning man, but too
busy, too meddling, too interfering; in fact, he was riding his
hobby-horse to death. But still he persisted; the memory of

three carts, one after the other, laden with the most
offensive manure, annoying, disgusting, nauseating
every wayfarer in that busy street and leaving a
poisonous train of stench of great strength and
persistence

still in his nostrils; and the sight of

....the bearers of coffins from one of our public institutions
covered with streams of disgusting and most offensive matter,
as they were carrying the dead to their last home

still in his eyes; and that figure, that shocking figure of more than
two hundred lives sacrificed last year in Hobart Town, still in his mind -
all due to the neglect of the most ordinary laws of sanitary science, which
for many years past had been satisfactorily demonstrated by the great
scientists of Europe.

Busy as he was with his medical practice, his writing, his
family, his participation in the affairs of his church, Hall yet found time
to consider other aspects of the health and welfare of the people. On
July 16 he attended a meeting at the Mechanics' Institute, held in aid of

"The Nightingale Fund" at which he announced that he was contemplating proposing the establishment of an institution for training nurses in Hobart Town.

As a medical man of no slight experience in large hospitals he had long experienced the want of efficient trained nurses, long seen the evil effects of employing mere hirelings. Time after time had his heart been wrung when he found his directions had been neglected, his patients suffering, their food curtailed by hireling nurses.

Until such time as nurses could be trained, he hoped that more people would serve in hospitals as a "labour of love".⁴ Two nights later, when Hall attended the Mechanics' Institute again to deliver a lecture on the "Structure and Functions of the Human Skin", a fellow citizen, W. Rout, agreed to cooperate with him in the preservation of Public Health and in the foundation of a Nurses' Institute. Apart from Miller's ever-ready journalistic support, it was the first public offer of cooperation which Hall had received and, as such, was warmly welcomed.⁵

Like other recent lectures by Hall, that of July 18 was reported at length in the Daily News to enable as many people as possible to receive its message. Although his easy, quiet, but impressive style of delivery always attracted a large audience to the Mechanics' Institute, his lectures were aimed at the Public beyond its doors as well. Each lecture he gave now, no matter what its title might be, was a lecture on Public Health in which he persistently drew attention to the sanitary principles commonly accepted overseas; in this case, the correct ventilation of homes and public buildings. In the words of the Daily News

the lecturer concluded by saying they were all personally and vitally interested in so momentous a subject, and that he should make no apology for forcing it upon their attention at every convenient opportunity. That while so large a proportion of the people were yearly perishing from neglect, from causes which he knew to be remediable, he should be a traitor to his conscience were he not to utter the voice of warning. The ruling axiom, he said, of his profession was that 'We wound to heal', that many a bitter nauseous dose of physic had to be administered for wholesome ends, though repugnant to the taste, and that in this spirit he would even risk boring them by his pertinacity in these vital subjects, because it was for their good more than his own.

⁴ Daily News, July 16, 1856.

⁵ Daily News, July 22, 1856.

Hall's extreme concern at the mortality rate in Hobarton was shown to be quite justified by Mackin's thirty page pamphlet "Report on the Health and Sanitary Conditions of the Town and Suburbs of Geelong, 1856," which was reviewed in the July issue of the Australian Medical Journal. Although Geelong's mortality rate was far less than that of Hobarton, 26.7 per 1000 as compared with 30.0 per 1000, Mackin still considered it far too high and in excess of what was held to be the standard of natural mortality, which is 2% of the population, and appealed to the civic authorities and to the Public to take heed. What then was to be said of Hobarton where it was so much higher? Hall hoped that at least the citizens would take note of the opinions in the sister colonies. Like Hall, Mackin found that at least half the number of deaths were of infants under five years of age, and that the high infant mortality rate was mainly due to three preventable causes: undue exposure of the body to heat and cold, unsuitable food and the employment of unskilled, uneducated medical attention in the case of illness.

On September 1, Hall decided that the approach of the summer months demanded that something more definite than writing and lecturing be done to improve the sanitary situation. He, therefore, addressed the Mayor and Aldermen of the city personally by letter. He set out his facts clearly and simply.⁶ It had been proved statistically that Hobarton was pre-eminent amongst cities for its excessive mortality; in 1855 the Registrar-General of Hobarton, whose district included the Police District of Hobart Town and the Police Sub-Districts of Brown's and the Huon Rivers, recorded 883 deaths out of a population of 26,095. The mortality rate was therefore 34 per 1000. In the whole of England and Wales the mortality rate for 1855 was less than 23 per 1000. However, by a more precise analysis of the Hobarton register, the number of deaths could be reduced to 775 or about 30 per 1000, which was still greatly in excess of the average. Local causes rather than personal habits were to blame, as could be proved by the following facts: in the Huon area, where the settlers' homes, food and habits were inferior to those in Hobarton, the mortality was 28 deaths out of a population of about 3,000 people, that is 9 1/2 per thousand. These people in the Huon, though deficient in many necessities of life, at least breathed pure air and had plenty of good water. The mortality rate for similar types of people in Hobart Town was double that in the Huon. In the whole of

⁶ Quoted Daily News, September 2, 1856.

Tasmania the number of deaths in 1855 was 1692 out of a free population of 62,222, that is, less than 28 per 1000. The rate in Hobarton was 6 per 1000 more. Counting convicts and all, the rate for the whole island was 22 per 1000, or 12 per 1000 (more than $\frac{1}{3}$) less than Hobart Town. Amongst the convict population the mortality rate was 11 per 1000.

These are startling facts which cannot be ignored and require the most serious consideration and searching examination..... With these rigidly deduced facts established, it cannot be doubted that there are causes existing within the city of an entirely local and remediable character, sweeping away annually a most fearful excess of the citizens.

He reminded the civic body as guardian of the citizens that under the English Health Act such an excessive mortality would be immediately investigated. Knowing that their financial resources were limited, he requested the Council to remove the worst of the city's nuisances, particularly the accumulations of mud and filth above the two dams at Harrington and Barrack Street Bridges and the heap of slaughter house mud near the Macquarie Street Bridge; possibly, too, the boulders from the Rivulet bed. He suggested means by which these objects might be achieved.

In October, the Australian Medical Journal published Part Two of Hall's article, "On the Medical Topography and Vital Statistics of Hobarton, Tasmania", in which he discussed the drainage of the city, its climatology and vital statistics. However, Hall was disappointed to find once again that many of his laboriously compiled tables contained typographical errors which tended to puzzle readers unacquainted with the facts. These tables, which revealed his keen interest in meteorology and his fruitful partnership with Abbott, were designed to prove that it was upon the hourly and daily changes of atmospheric phenomena that the healthiness or otherwise of any climate depended. His vital statistics revealed two interesting facts - in Hobarton in 1855, the rate of illegitimacy was very low, the rate of fecundity very high, due, as he said, no doubt to the ample supply of the most nutritious food.

Absolute want, or even stinted allowance, is a thing almost unknown in Tasmania.

This section of the article indicated, too, that Hall and Abbott realized that there were other important factors underlying health and disease, besides the laws of sanitation, which deserved investigation. Together, they looked forward keenly to the arrival of a new set of instruments with which they hoped to conduct experiments on "ozone", a subject very much in the scientific news at that time.

Furthermore, in October 1856, Hall commenced another self-imposed task, which he undertook in the interests of the community - his "Monthly Report on the Health of Hobarton" which he furnished first to the Royal Society and later to the press. These reports, which he continued to compile without interruption for twenty-five years until his death in 1881, always followed a similar pattern; firstly, he compared the number of deaths in the month with that of the previous month, and then with the same month in the preceding six years; deaths were then divided into age groupings and subsequently again according to fifteen different classes or causes of death, which varied from zymotic diseases to old age. Considerable meteorological detail followed, including readings of the barometer, thermometer, and the wet bulb thermometer, plus records of solar intensity, elastic force of vapour, rain, wind force, amount of ozone and the like. The report, half mortality statistics, half meteorological details, usually concluded with a summary of the beneficence of otherwise of the weather, and a word of warning or advice on health. For those who took the trouble to read Hall's reports, there was much interesting information and suggestion; to those who did not, there was at the least an apparent, strong emphasis on the importance of health.⁷

In November, Hall added another item to his steadily increasing list of duties. When the newly established "Servants' Home Society" asked for voluntary medical assistance, he, together with J. Agnew, immediately offered his services to the inmates of the home.

⁷ See Appendices for an example.

CHAPTER 11

VITAL STATISTICS

During the last months of 1856 a new, significant element entered into Hall's struggle for health reforms, resulting from his association with Miller. Following the representations of the "Working-class" group on August 4 that he should stand as its candidate to the House of Assembly, Miller was elected to the new Parliament as the first "labour" member for Hobarton: thus the potential power of legislative opportunity and authority was added to the weight of journalistic support. Both Miller and Hall intended to use it.

'Vital Statistics' were now of immense importance. Hall's entire argument, all his evidence depended upon the accuracy and sufficiency of the Registrar-General's data. In the countless, laborious hours he spent at the Registrar's Office sifting facts and figures and compiling tables, he frequently felt much impatience and annoyance at the defects and inadequacies of the returns; too much time was allowed to elapse after a death occurred before it was registered, even months in the case of Government officials and institutions; information concerning the "native place" of the deceased, the "place of decease" and the "cause of death" was often meagre, vague, too general and incorrect; deaths occurring on emigrant and other ships whilst at sea were also recorded incorrectly in the Register of the Hobarton district. Having carefully studied and compared the methods used in Tasmania for registering returns with those overseas, he realized that the defective system in Tasmania must be remedied. When he discovered that the Legislature was considering passing a bill to abolish the office of Registrar-General of Births, Deaths and Marriages as a distinct department and to transfer the duties to the office of the Registrar of Deeds, a very detrimental step in his opinion, he decided to direct a petition to both Houses of Parliament.

Although Hall's petition, presented by W. Kermode on December 19, 1856, did not prevent the passing of the bill in question

on the same day, it, nevertheless, brought the need for the urgent initiation of sanitary legislation before Parliament in clear, succinct terms.

By the officially published "Statistics of Tasmania for 1855", it appears that 1692 deaths took place in that year out of a free population of 62,222 individuals, - that is, at the rate of about 27,000 per million of inhabitants; whereas in the great Metropolis of England, on an average of fifteen years (including two years when cholera raged so destructively) the mortality per million was only 24,883 ... the disproportion for Hobarton, and its rural sub-districts of Brown's and the Huon Rivers, for 1855, was even greater than the foregoing; Your Petitioner classed and tabled from the Hobarton Registry 752 deaths (exclusive of Military) as having occurred in these districts from the 1st January to 31st December, 1855, out of a free population of about 23,000 individuals: that is, at the rate of nearly 8,000 deaths per million of population more than in London; or an excess of nearly 32 per cent of deaths, even in the comparatively favourable year of 1855.¹

Actually Hall was gratified to hear some weeks later that the Registrar of the Supreme Court, W. Sorell, now also the Registrar of Births, Deaths and Marriages from January 1, had courteously and sensibly adopted some of his suggestions for improving the returns, including the tabling in Parliament of a numerical return of deaths registered in all the Registration districts of Tasmania.²

Hall's determination to improve the health situation in Hobarton was strengthened by the annual report of the Medical Officer of Health on the sanitary condition of the City of London, which disclosed that the death rate there had been reduced from a general average of 24 per 1000 to 22. But he was becoming impatient at the failure of his fellow citizens to respond to his warnings. From the beginning of 1857 a subtle difference in his attitude was noticeable, due possibly to his full realisation of the truth, pity for his fellow-citizens, and frustration at his own lack of achievement. Convinced of the correctness of his opinions, he assumed a position of authority in Public Health and Vital Statistics, to the annoyance of some of his professional colleagues and others who opposed him.

Nevertheless, the situation was a stalemate; the Legislature decreed that Public Health was the affair of the Municipal Council and declined to interfere; the civic body, though well intentioned, was

¹ L.C.J., 1856/2.

² L.C.J., 1856/14.

limited by its financial resources; whilst the Public, ensconced in its own apathetic, dirty habits, was inclined to regard Hall as a figure of excitement, a "stirrer", a "compulsive scribbler" to the columns of the press, an exhibitionist whose antics must be tolerated. A lesser man than Hall would probably have given up the struggle at this point and turned his attention elsewhere, but he was not of this calibre; he was a man of strong convictions, high principles and a well-developed conscience; moreover, he was deeply involved with Abbott in scientific experiments on the relationship between climate and health, whilst at the same time deriving considerable pleasure and satisfaction from his contact with overseas societies both medical and statistical. For moral and scientific reasons, therefore, he persisted in the battle for reform, utilizing every possible opportunity, both in the press and on the lecture platform, to extol the doctrine of Public Health.

On January 13 Hall and Abbott collaborated in reading before the Royal Society a half-yearly summary of meteorological phenomena for the second half of 1856, together with the mortality returns for the same period. On this occasion Hall commented that natives of the colony appeared to possess a certain amount of immunity to tuberculosis, as compared with immigrants from Europe. Already his mind was turning over facts and figures concerned with epidemic diseases in the colony, an indication of the new scientific trend in all his thinking.

In January, too, he debated the salubrity of the climates of Bothwell and Hamilton with a local "statist" through the columns of the Courier, at the same time taking the opportunity to comment:

... what a disgraceful reflection it is upon colonial management to know that the deaths in our northern and southern capitals are so great as to raise the total mortality of the colony to a proportion considerably greater than even that of the city of London.

Again, the arrival of "The Great Tasmania", after a voyage of seventy-four days from Liverpool, enabled him to point out the beneficial measures adopted by the company and crew to preserve the health of the passengers.

As I was an utter stranger to all on board until I visited on the 27th instant, my testimony is unbiassed and I feel that I should not be doing as I would be done unto if I did not give it public expression.³

On February 3, in a review of an article in the Australian Medical Journal

³ Daily News, February 2, 1857.

by D.E. Wilkie, he declared that 33 deaths from croup in 1856 out of a population of about 23,000 was fearfully great in comparison even with London.

Were the diseases in Hobarton only as fatal as in London, at most 4 deaths should have taken place instead of 33. For very shamesake, our governing authorities will not be able much longer to ignore and disregard such facts as these. The neglect of sanitary precautions by which the excessive mortality of Hobarton and Launceston is kept up, so far behind the rural districts, will ere long make Tasmania the scoff and scorn of every other civilized community.⁴

Towards the end of February Hall's increasing impatience was becoming even more apparent. In a letter to the Daily News on "Vital Statistics" he praised the tabling in Parliament of the "Returns" of deaths for every district in the island.

The minutely detailed returns will still further corroborate the salient points in our mortuary statistics which I have so long struggled to enforce upon public attention. Such documents having the weight of official authority will not be open to the frivolous and vexatious cavils of jealous, incompetent or apprehensive objectors. They will form a standard of comparison for medical and sanitary investigation of great weight and value. By their means the sanitary defects of many public institutions can be usefully subjected to fearless and honest criticism.⁵

Undoubtedly these quiet words conveyed an ominous note of warning from a very determined man.

Yet, not all of Hall's efforts were in vain and, herein, gleamed a ray of hope for the future which pleased and encouraged him. In public buildings, such as the new building behind the Female Hospital in Liverpool Street, the Catholic Church of Jerusalem, and the Wesleyan Chapel in Brisbane Street, his opinion on ventilation was sought and considered. When the Houses of Legislature were equipped with gas lighting, he was asked to give evidence before the "Ventilation Committee", and many of the ideas he had suggested as far back as his lecture on "Respiration" in 1855, were adopted.⁶ Although the systems of ventilation installed in these buildings were, in his opinion, to some extent imperfect, it was a beginning in the right direction; further

⁴ Daily News, February 3, 1857.

⁵ Daily News, February 23, 1857.

⁶ H.A.P., 1856/33.

improvements would take place as the idea caught on. Indeed, the introduction of gas lighting into Hobarton in March and April, 1857, provided Hall with an excellent opportunity to emphasize the need for correct ventilation, especially as shops and similar buildings installed lighting without making adequate provision for the intake of fresh air.

Hall's insistence on bringing his statistical evidence before the Public was truly remarkable at this time. Perhaps some citizens of Hobarton could have been excused for calling him a compulsive scribbler, but the fact that Miller was prepared to publish all his letters, often accompanied by a long extract from an English report, disproved this epithet. Actually, Hall was determined by sheer repetition, if nothing else, to break through the barrier of apathy, ignorance and conservatism, perhaps even religious snobbery; but his patience was wearing very thin. In a letter to the Daily News on Public Health on April 20 he wrote:

The indisputable mortality statistics for 1855 and 1856, laid before the Legislative Council on the motion of the honorable Mr Kermode, will effectively suppress all further attempts to impute exaggeration to any of the statements I have made on this important subject. Those returns show that in 1855, a total of 1593 deaths were registered for the whole colony and that of this number Hobarton and Launceston claimed the enormous proportion of 1161. If, therefore, for the sake of comparison we were to admit that half the free population of that year were residents in those two towns and their districts, the rate of deaths in them would be more than 37 per thousand, while the 432 deaths for all the rest of the island would only be 14 per thousand.

Once more, almost in desperation, he continued,

These returns are pregnant with instruction in every item, and demand the careful examination of every humane man. All crude and flippant guessing objections melt away before the minute and comprehensive details they embody. Had sanitary measures been as successfully applied here, as they have been in Macclesfield (England) and they could be much more so - since the census of 1851, at least one thousand lives would have been saved in Hobarton alone. A heavy responsibility rests upon all having the power to effect such a saving of human life and neglecting to act upon it. I have taken care that my conscience shall never accuse me of slighting or retarding an improvement of such vital importance.

The third, longest and most important section of Hall's article "On the Medical Topography and Vital Statistics of Hobarton, Tasmania in 1855" was published in the Australian Medical Journal in April, 1857. Written in October 1856 and devoted exclusively to a detailed examination

of the Vital Statistics of Hobartton generally, and some of its institutions in particular, it revealed Hall, the statist, at his best. At the time of its publication, few people in the city realized just how great its repercussions would be. No doubt to some professional men holding important, responsible positions in the community, it was a nasty shock, a bitter pill to swallow. It also revealed the depth to which Hall had penetrated into the science of "Vital Statistics" and his wide knowledge of related subjects; in short, it offered little opportunity for argument by anyone in Hobartton, as the facts spoke for themselves.

Hall commenced his remarks by stating that his six tables, one of which detailed minutely and comprehensively all the deaths in 1855 under the different classes and genera of diseases at every age, the other five giving the deaths of children under three years of age for 1851-2-3-4-5, were compiled from the Hobart Town Registry with great labour and difficulty, owing to the very imperfect system of recording used.

In the construction of the table for 1855 I have been at great pains to make it conform with the arrangement and nosology adopted by the Registrar-General of England. In fact I have recast it throughout for that purpose; not that I mean thereby to acknowledge unconditionally the perfection of the plan, or to subscribe to the theories of disease that may be inferred from it; but that I think it of great moment that uniformity in all works in the English language, on Vital Statistics, should be aimed at as much as possible. To effect this agreement has been no easy task, from the very absurd terms under which the informants generally have recorded "the cause of death".

So imperfect was the system of registration in 1855-56 that deaths in January 1855 were not recorded until July.

Here the Registrar-General of England would find it almost useless to attempt to carry out his valuable 'Weekly Reports' on public health.

Referring to his own "Monthly Report on the Public Health of Hobartton" he maintained that these would never be perfect until a system similar to that used in Denmark was instituted. Once again, he stressed the enormity of the death rate in Hobartton, 752 deaths in 1855 out of a population of 23,000.

This is more than $3\frac{1}{4}\%$, or nearly one out of every thirty-one inhabitants and about one per cent above the average of England, and even very considerably above the average for fifteen years of London, with its numerous deaths from smallpox, cholera, typhus fever and other

diseases - happily as yet unknown in Tasmania. The average per million inhabitants of deaths in London is, according to the admirable tables by Dr Guy of King's College in the Statistical Journal for December 1855, 24,883. The proportion per million for Hobarton etc. would be about 32,712 or 7,829 deaths more per million.

This he considered was startling enough to arouse the most apathetic to action.

Hall then examined the mortality of a rural district - the Huon - to prove that the country mortality was very much less proportionately, and that the Tasmanian climate was even more favorable to health than the best districts of England; indeed, the rate of mortality in rural areas was 14 per thousand as compared with 37 per 1000 for Hobarton and Launceston. Therefore, at least 500 lives in these two towns were sacrificed in 1855 through neglect of sanitary precautions. Some remarkable instances of extreme old age followed.

From these facts it is fair to infer that longevity in Tasmania has as high, if not a higher range than in England.

Convicts, he found, died at the rate of 11 per 1,000, whilst the free population of the same age in Hobarton died at the rate of 24 $\frac{1}{2}$ per 1,000. Deaths of children in the convict nurseries he was glad to show had decreased considerably, though still twice as great as those of the same age in the district at large.

Having been the means of drawing public attention to the excessive mortality amongst this class of the population and having demonstrated that it could be reduced, I have a right to feel an honest pride that my agitation of the subject has resulted in so large a saving of human life. Still there is but little to boast of, and a wide scope for further improvement.

Hall concluded 'Part Three' with a classified table of the 38 deaths for 1855 in the Orphan School, and an investigation into the whole economy of that institution, a subject to which he had not previously referred. This was his "coup de grace", the effects of which were felt by many people in the months to come. Thirty-eight deaths of children above one, and at and under three years of age, out of 57 admitted and 57 remaining for 1854, or a total of 114 in 1855, was anything but creditable to colonial management, when compared with deaths of children in similar circumstances in overseas institutions.

Surely it required a searching enquiry to ascertain why children of the same age, with so many advantages in their favour, should die in the Orphan School at a ratio nearly six times greater than children do amongst the population outside of that establishment.

Carefully and precisely Hall set out to prove that the mortality rate was incredibly high. Comparing it with the death rate of children elsewhere, he found that in 1854, 53 children out of 422 had died, or a little more than $\frac{1}{8}$ of the whole, or nearly 13%, or 130 per 1000. Of the 114 deaths in three years at the school, had there been no such institution and had the children there received taken their chance with all the rest of the children in the country districts, at the utmost only 7 would have died; in other words, 107 children perished in the Orphan School over and above the average rate of death for children of the same age in all the country districts of Tasmania. Such a shocking state of mortality he ascribed to the inability of the children to withstand epidemic attacks equally as well as other children, due to a lack of constitutional stamina which was principally induced by insufficient breathing space by night, too great an exposure to chilling through draughts by day, and a very limited supply of animal food. Of the food he wrote

Any parent in Tasmania would think it a mockery to serve their hearty growing boys such a morsel after it was cooked.

He described the orphan boys as stunted, fat, potbellied, dull and inactive, in contrast to boarding-school boys under his care who were tall, thin but muscular, full of activity and smart.

The excessive mortality at the Orphan School has created very wide spread dissatisfaction for many years. Boards of enquiry have been instituted, but constituted as they were alone of officials responsible for the management, the finding could not be otherwise than unsatisfactory to every reasonable person. I have spared no pains to investigate the subject in a thoroughly independent and unprejudiced spirit, and I solicit my medical brethren in Australia to examine the question in its humane and scientific aspects alone, and to aid me in ameliorating the sad condition I have depicted.

Hall hoped that the convict authorities in charge would undertake reforms themselves, without waiting for indignant pressure from outside. It was the duty of every man of science, every person interested in Public Health, every friend of humanity, to help find out the causes of such havoc from disease in the Queen's Orphan Schools and help to remove them.

His final paragraphs, pregnant with feeling and determination, revealed him as a humanitarian whose motives could not reasonably be questioned. Speaking of the Orphan School, he wrote

The institution, in its objects, is a noble one. Its appearance is most prepossessing, from its commanding and picturesque position, its external architecture, and the

cleanliness, order and propriety maintained. No mere casual inspector can go away from its inspection without being favourably impressed with its management; and yet its vital statistics reveal the sad tale I have so carefully elucidated. If my labours are as fruitful in results as they have been in the parallel case of the Convict Nurseries, in a few years the lives saved may be counted by hundreds, and one of my life-long aspirations will be realized. I began my professional career in Liverpool, nearly thirty years ago, by voluntarily devoting my abilities in behalf of female orphans, and with gratifying and encouraging success; and if my life ends, as it any day may do, while still, though at the antipodes, struggling for an equally glorious object, I feel that I shall not have lived in vain, though I have not amassed a fortune, and shall leave to my children nothing but the example of acting in every duty of life on the principle - "Whatever betide, for the right".

On sanitary reform he was equally firm.

The noble exertions of our profession at home have already achieved mighty and progressive improvements in England. The same fearless and searching enquiry which led to such success, should be made everywhere. No personal, political, or any other feelings, than those of the present scientific philanthropy ought to be an actuating motive in the research. That it should ever be otherwise, is only to say that poor human nature is not exempt from its inherent frailties. The Registrar-General of England remarks in one of his reports of last year, that the lives saved by sanitary regulations have been double the number of all those sacrificed by the war. This is a most encouraging result to stimulate other labourers in the wide field of sanitary reform to the exertions of the Walkers, Arnotts, Smiths, Sutherlands, Greys, Simons, Playfairs, Duncans etc. of the medical profession.

In 1923, sixty-seven years later, J.H.L. Cumpston, the Director-General of the Commonwealth Department of Health, writing in the periodical Health, named Hall "The First Australian Sanitarian". His series of articles, declared Cumpston, showed an appreciation of sanitary principles far in advance of anything else recorded at that time, and he discussed water supply, ventilation, offensive trades and other similar matters in terms which might well be used with slight changes in a Public Health report today.

The honour of being the first man in Australia to preach the gospel of public health with an inspired intelligence and courageously to fight for health reforms in the face of great obstruction belongs to Dr Edward Swarbreck Hall, M.R.C.S., of Hobart.

CHAPTER 12

CONFLICT

Essentially a man of action, Hall was unable to tolerate indefinitely the apathy and indifference with which his efforts to improve Public Health were usually met. Moreover, he now felt sufficiently confident of his own position in the community, as a private medical practitioner, a man of science and learning, and the foremost Catholic layman, to risk another conflict with those who supported, or were supported by the "status quo". Whatever the spark that actually ignited the fire, at a meeting of the Royal Society on June 10, 1857, his patience snapped. At the beginning of the meeting he interrupted the Secretary, Dr J. Milligan, who was intent on carrying out the usual business procedures, to demand that his Health Reports for the previous four months, passed over at each meeting, take precedence, "their subject being one of vital importance to the community". After lengthy debate and argument, in which Hall was supported by Miller, the meeting was finally given over to reading and discussing the reports. It was the beginning of another struggle, this time staged in the polite but no less bitter language of the Royal Society.

In these reports, Hall referred especially to the amount of 'ozone' in the atmosphere, as determined by his and Abbott's observations; possibly, he thought, the remarkable difference between the average mortality rate throughout the country districts (14 per 1000 - less than one third that of Hobart) and that of the city might be explained by obtaining a series of ozonometrical observations carefully registered in different localities in the city and the country. He offered to make one set of observations at his own residence, now in Nile Terrace. However, Milligan denied that such an explanation was possible, since the mean for Melbourne in April was 4.5 on Schönbein's scale as compared with Hobart's 6.07. Since the death rate in Melbourne was lower than in Hobart, the amount of ozone, which was much greater in the latter city,

had little to do with it.¹

Nonetheless Hall's keen interest in discovering the exact relationship between health and the ozone factor was apparent in a lecture which he gave on July 16, 1857, to a crowded audience at the Mechanics' Institute in answer to the question frequently asked "What is ozone?". As far as can be ascertained, "ozone" was first mentioned in a Tasmanian newspaper on February 1, 1851, when The Irish Exile and Freedom's Advocate wrote:

A few years back Professor Schönbein (of Basle University, Germany) inventor of gun cotton, discovered that the peculiar smell which invariably attends the working of an ordinary electrifying machine, is due to the formation of a new and most remarkable substance, which he termed "ozone". The peculiar property of this "ozone" is that it immediately deprives the most putrid solid or fluid bodies of all disagreeable smell and sulphuretted hydrogen is instantly decomposed by it. The excess or deficiency of this ozone, it appears, is dependent upon the electrical charges of the atmosphere. In an atmosphere highly charged with electricity, there is an excess of ozone, and as the electricity diminishes, so in the same ratio does the ozone an excess of ozone produces influenza, just as a deficiency produces cholera.

In short, ozone was one of the principal chemical agents evolved by electricity, which, in the laboratory of the atmosphere, maintained the purity of the air breathed by man and the animals.

The Daily News which published Hall's long lecture 'verbatim' on July 18 described it as "interesting and instructive", in which the nature and properties of ozone were explained by the "learned lecturer" in a scientific, but at the same time, clear, perspicuous and entertaining manner. In analysis, the lecture revealed in simple clarity Hall as he was at this time: his rich delight in science, with which he hoped to imbue others; his eagerness to incorporate its new, refreshing, invigorating discoveries into all his thinking and activities; his forward-looking, prophetic vision, and his hopes for the future.

....We may, however, be excused at this distance from the foci of scientific light, if we only occasionally, and at irregular intervals, catch a stray ray or two of new discoveries, and even then ascertain that we are short of many other beams, to perfect our knowledge of the spectrum of new light which has dawned elsewhere. We are at the world's end. But when modern science succeeds in presenting us at our breakfast tables the news of yesterday from the old world, borne on the wings of the electric flash, then

¹ Courier, June 17, 1857.

we may be able to keep pace in knowledge with our brethren in the other hemisphere, and perhaps return them a brilliant thing or two of Australian origin....

Likewise, it revealed his admiration and respect for the great achievers in science, like Sir Michael Faraday and Schönbein, and his simple faith in the goodness and reasonableness of creation, that all things would be explained if man had the time and patience to persist in enquiry.

....Wherever electricity passes from the negative to the positive state in atmospheric air, ozone is generated. Electrical discharges take place not only during thunderstorms but daily and hourly in many operations of nature. How beautiful are Nature's laws ! How powerfully, how providentially, how beneficently has the adorable God of Nature - its Creator and Ours - supplied all our wants. Even in that awful commotion when His thunderbolts are flashing around us, and the war of the elements seems to threaten the dissolution of all things, the Christian philosopher can now recognize His paternal care, the very lightning engaged in the elixir of health.

Basing the whole theme of his lecture on the popular notion that atmospheric charges influenced the state of human health, and that the epidemic constitution of the air which produced pestilence was an effect of changes in the air of a more remarkable kind, Hall maintained that people must work in accordance with the laws of nature.

Abbott's and Hall's experiments proved conclusively that the amounts of ozone available varied considerably from time to time and from place to place: inside stuffy, ill-ventilated rooms there was none; in parts of the city exposed to fresh sea-winds from the south or east there was plenty; once the winds had passed over the city the amount dropped considerably; it seemed that the amount of ozone available might vary inversely to the proportion of bad sanitation. After discussing his findings Hall concluded

I am confident that it will ultimately be proved that this favoured isle is more liberally supplied with Ozone than almost any climate in the world.

He appealed to his audience not to throw away such an advantage foolishly, but to allow nature to carry out her laws by agreeing to the reforms he advocated. Although the lecture offered no definite proof of the validity of Hall's arguments, it was an attempt to give them a scientific basis. Justifying himself and his theme he summed up his belief:

The subject of Ozone, however little known here, is not a recondite, abstruse, trivial, unpopular one, in which only medical and scientific men have any interest. That

it is not merely the hobby of dreaming philosophers, or a theme only for zealous, troublesome, notoriety-seeking busy-bodies, but that it is studied and applied by the practical working philosophers and philanthropists moving in the most active spheres of life. In fact, by all who are in earnest to improve the health and comfort and prolong the lives of their fellow men. It is one of practical importance to you all.

To a man like Hall, whose vision and insight were exceptional for his age, entrenched ignorance was a source of despair and an insurmountable barrier. By mid-1857 he realized there was little point in appealing to the nebulous mass of Hobartton society; instead, he decided to concentrate his efforts on those who, since they often held positions of authority, might be expected to understand the logic of his arguments and to act either individually or corporately. Impatient of the epithets so often applied to him - the dreamer, the busy-body, the troublemaker, the notoriety-seeker - and acutely aware of the hostility he had already evoked in the Royal Society, he spent every moment he could spare from his professional duties from July to September on the preparation of a paper, "The Vital Statistics of Tasmania for the Year 1856", to be presented to that body, in the hope that the careful comparisons he instituted between the rates of mortality existing between the two principal towns, Hobartton and Launceston, the various country localities of the island, and the town and country districts in England, would prove of future benefit to the community, and convince those in influential positions of the need for reform.

Hall's elaborate and much publicized paper was read on Tuesday, September 8, in the presence of many Hobartton notables including W. Henty, the Colonial Secretary; T.J. Knight, the Solicitor-General; and several members of both Houses of Parliament. But Hall was quite unprepared for the immediate and violent reaction it occasioned. At the conclusion of the paper, Bedford, the Medical Officer at the Queen's Orphan Schools, swiftly criticized as erroneous, unjust, and founded on insufficient data, certain of Hall's statements concerning the mortality at the Schools; he objected that two or three years, during which the greatest mortality prevailed, were selected for a mean instead of an average being deduced from a series of a dozen years or more. He also strongly criticized Hall's statement that there was a marked deficiency of gluten in Tasmanian wheat as compared with that produced elsewhere, and that the children at the Orphan Schools should be given three-quarters of a pound

of meat per day to counteract this deficiency in nutriment. If there were such a deficiency, which he (Bedford) doubted, it should be imputed to imperfect tillage and want of manure, rather than leaving it to be inferred, in a way detrimental to Tasmania, to conditions of climate and soil. Giving those present no time to collect their thoughts, with forceful, subtle skill, Bedford drew their attention away from the main issue of the paper, "mortality rates" and fastened it on a minor allusion to the lack of nutritional value in Tasmanian wheat, a touchy subject amongst Tasmanian growers and exporters. In the confusion of thought and feeling that followed, whilst Hall saw all his valuable, painstakingly-prepared data foundering on a "red herring", Miller suggested the paper be printed to enable members to judge for themselves. However, Milligan, whose dislike and hostility were now obvious, clinched the matter by saying Hall's paper affected the character and market value of one of the staple products of the colony, and the Society should be careful in sanctioning a statement which might be very injurious, exciting feelings of irritation throughout the land. If true, he did not see any good to be achieved by publishing it to the world, and if proved not to be the fact, then the Society would find it had taken a position which it could neither attempt to maintain with credit, nor fall back from with a good grace. Accordingly, it was decided to submit the question of publication to the Council of the Royal Society.² That such a decision was necessary was due to the fact that no Papers and Proceedings were printed as part of the Society's normal activities between January, 1855, when Volume III Part I appeared, and January, 1859, when Volume III Part II was published.

Fortunately, in the next few weeks, whilst he awaited the Council's decision, Hall found little time to dwell on his disappointment at his paper's reception. On September 11, he chaired a lecture on "Food", given by his friend and assistant in many experiments, E. Pears, at the Mechanics' Institute; the nutritional value of food and its effects on health interested him greatly.³ But it was the announcement by the Central Board of Health in Melbourne that smallpox had broken out in the neighbourhood of Lonsdale Street West and Spencer Street that galvanized him into action.⁴ Urgently he reiterated in a long article

² Courier, September 14, 1857.

³ Daily News, September 11, 1857.

⁴ Daily News, October 5 & 12, 1857.

to the Daily News on October 5 the need for cleanliness, efficient drainage and immediate mass vaccination, citing Denison's lecture on "Sewerage and Drainage" in 1853 as his authority.

At the next meeting of the Royal Society on October 13, Hall read a letter of apology to Bedford, disclaiming any intention to appear personal in his remarks, and expressing his willingness to withdraw from his paper any expression considered personally offensive to him. However, Bedford's well-directed attack was effective; the Council decided it was undesirable for the interests of Tasmania that the paper be printed. In an effort to change this decision, Miller pointed out that the Council ought to have indicated the matter or passages which they considered objectionable, and asked Hall to cancel or correct them. He moved "that the paper stand over for discussion at a special general meeting on October 26th". This was agreed.⁵

Exactly what occurred at this meeting is not clear. As the press were excluded from all Royal Society meetings, much to Miller's chagrin, the only report of the proceedings, which appeared in the Courier on November 18, was written by Milligan himself. Hall, in a letter first to the Courier which refused to publish it, and then to the Daily News, objected strongly to the fact that twenty three days had elapsed between the time of the meeting and the date of the publication of the report; in addition, he complained that Milligan had

....perverted, mutilated and misrepresented his sentiments, statements and arguments.The injury done to the cause of science and truth by the exclusion of the press from the meetings of the Royal Society could not be more forcibly illustrated than by the very tardy and most erroneous report of the Secretary furnished to your paper.

He accused Milligan of an utter reversal of the statements emphatically and repeatedly urged by him in his Medico-Vital Statistics paper.

For years I have been strenuously maintaining, in numerous published communications, that Tasmania possesses one of the most salubrious climates in the world. The very gist of my paper is founded on this fact, and the proofs to establish it are elaborated with the most minute care and accurate research. The excessive mortality of Hobart Town, Launceston and the Orphan School, it is shown, has arisen from hygienic mismanagement and sanitary neglect. Scarcely a page of my voluminous paper but what enforces in the most indisputable data, the important fact of the climatic superiority of Tasmania over our native land.

⁵ Courier, October 21, 1857.

He urged that no reliance could be placed on the accuracy of Milligan's monthly precis of the Society's proceedings, and the sooner the press were freely admitted the better for the credit of everybody.⁶

Milligan's report of the special meeting on October 26 showed only too clearly that, even in the Royal Society, the purport of Hall's paper and his altruistic motives were generally misunderstood; instead, he was accused of personal antagonism towards Bedford and, what was worse, disloyalty to Tasmania.⁷ It was a bitter disappointment. However, the Society did decide to establish a committee, to which Hall was appointed, to make a thorough analysis of Tasmanian wheat and flour.* Unfortunately for posterity, Hall's paper, compiled so painstakingly and at such cost, was consigned to oblivion.

Events charged with anxiety and tension hastened its demise: already the spectre of smallpox hovered close by in Victoria; at midnight on Saturday, October 31, the scourge of typhus fever actually arrived in the "Persian" which had sailed from Liverpool on July 26 with a crew of 30 and over 300 immigrants, including 252 adults, 66 children from 1 to 12 years, and 7 infants. With 14 people already dead on the voyage, there were now 29 incipient, 1 severe and 6 convalescent cases, with the disease worsening daily. Hobarton, shocked and fearful, quickly revealed how ill-prepared it was for such an emergency, in spite of Hall's persistent warnings. On its arrival, the "Persian" was anchored by the pilot at the Quarantine ground opposite Sandy Bay, where at 4 a.m. on November 1 it was visited by Benson, who immediately reported the existence of typhus fever on board to the Colonial-Secretary. At 4 p.m. on the same day, Benson visited again and strongly urged the Colonial-Secretary to remove all passengers from the vessel. Henty, in turn, immediately reported the matter to the Governor, requesting a meeting of the Executive Council, as the ship could not be placed in quarantine without the order of the Governor-in-Council. As the Governor was unfortunately out of town, a second letter was despatched to him on November 2 and a meeting of the Executive Council convened for Tuesday, November 3, at 11 a.m. In the meantime, in the absence of the Governor, the Cabinet Council made arrangements for sending the "Persian" to Impression Bay where the immigrants were to be landed. The Comptroller-General was called in to assist with supplies of blankets and food.

⁶ Daily News, November 24, 1857.

⁷ Courier, November 18, 1857.

* See Chapter 13.

On November 2 Benson reported much dissatisfaction on board the vessel at not being allowed to land, and urgent need for extra medical assistance. On Tuesday, on the Governor's return, the Executive Council ordered the pilot-in-charge to take the ship to Impression Bay, but the crew refused to comply. At the same time, the Colonial-Secretary sought extra medical assistance, no easy task under the circumstances, considering it was only prepared to offer one guinea per day for such service. After "higgling" with at least three doctors, one of whom requested ten guineas per day, Henty approached Hall on November 4. Believing that no other doctor could be obtained, and sensible of his professional duty towards suffering humanity, Hall replied that, although he preferred not to go, he would do so on condition that he received five guineas per day and a pension of two hundred pounds a year for his wife and family should he succumb to the disease. This offer the Colonial-Secretary declined. After some negotiations with Scott at five guineas per day fell through, the Government accepted the offer of Eckford, the Resident Medical Officer at the General Hospital, at three guineas per day. On November 4, after four days of quibbling, the "Persian" was towed to Impression Bay by the "Mimosa", arriving there on the 5th. Eckford arrived, too, the next day after a nightmare voyage in an open boat manned by a crew of three in a gale force wind. On November 9 he reported that the sick had been separated and the ship thoroughly cleaned, and that the situation, as far as possible, was under control.⁸

In Hobarton argument and recrimination prevailed. Hall, of course, was thoroughly aroused, exceedingly verbose, and bitingly contemptuous both of the Government's heedless lack of foresight and planning, and the callous indifference and self-willed ignorance of his personal opponents.

....no truckling toadyism, no self-interested servility, no moral cowardice, no sluggish indifference and apathy shall restrain my pen from writing or my tongue from uttering the voice of censure and warning....

he wrote to the Daily News on November 5, determined to make the most of the crisis to drive the need for reform home.

The hurry and confusion, the melancholy mismanagement and the reckless expense now evinced by the Government

he strongly condemned, pointing out that the large and well ventilated hospital at Impression Bay should never have been dismantled but retained

⁸ Daily News, November 12, 1857.

as a Quarantine Station. He agreed with Officer that it would have been comparative wisdom to have landed the immigrants under the gum trees on a barren, rocky isle in the channel with a few sails for shelter, rather than to have kept them four days and nights with disease and death rife round them, tantalized by the sight of town and freedom. He accused Henty, Milligan and the Council of the Royal Society of irresponsibility and a failure to face the facts, as set out in his "Medico-Vital Statistics" paper and his monthly "Health Reports" which, instead of being left to accumulate unheeded for twelve months, would in future be published immediately in the Daily News for the benefit of the Public. But the depth and bitterness of his anger at Bedford's neglect of the children under his charge in the Orphan School surpassed all else.

There are some people either so callous, so indifferent or so ignorant and self-willed as never to be alarmed. Death may have reaped its victims in public institutions at a rate from six to eight times greater than children of the same age, at the same time, have died in the country. This may even have been demonstrated irrefutably to have taken place on an average of seventeen successive years. And yet there are persons so obtuse, so prejudiced, to see nothing in this for alarm, nothing to amend. That 263 children may have perished when - had they not been subjected to the tender, watchful care of such an institution and taken their chance with the "wild colt" children of the colonists at large, but 30-40 would have died.

In ringing words, to which his opponents, like Bedford and Milligan, would have been well advised to listen, Hall proclaimed both his determination and his intention;

Now I proclaim myself an alarmist, and in the ears of all such as I have described, I will ring an alarum that shall at least apprise the public of their neglect - and shame them if possible into the execution of such urgent and imperative duties. Whatever conscience or duty, Sir, indicates that I ought to do, either as man, Christian, gentleman or medical practitioner, no self interest, no fear - moral or physical - has ever yet, and I pray God never may, direct me from carrying it into execution. One member of the Government, at least, did me justice - for which I thank him - when he said, "that where the alleviation of human suffering was the object, he believed that Dr Hall would walk to death itself".⁹

The next day, Hall seethed at the personal attacks levelled against him by the Courier over his request for a pension of two hundred pounds for his family. In a furious letter to the Daily News on November 8, he attacked the Executive for higgling about terms with medical practitioners who had expressed their readiness to undertake the

⁹ Daily News, November 7, 1857.

task of caring for the sick at Impression Bay, and for the miserable advantage they had taken of Eckford's poor financial position.

We are indeed at the Antipodes. Young lawyers grabbing their thousands for 'liability to loss of office' and then becoming Premiers - lawyers who have comparatively early in life retired from their offices with independent fortunes, and then, enjoying the sweets of office to the tune of twelve hundred per annum, coolly valuing the arduous and dangerous avocations of gentlemen at least their equals at the sum of one pound per day and a government ration.That the Executive Council should deliberately have valued a medical man's services, in such a duty, is an indelible disgrace to them, and an unpardonable insult to us.

Likewise, he attacked members of his own profession who, though worldly successful themselves, had declined the service on any terms, and yet had the effrontery to condemn the condition of the offer of a poor man like himself.

While medical men continue backbiting, undermining and underselling one another instead of combining for mutual protection, so long will mean lawyers and other purse-proud mammon worshippers hold us cheap, and think we make 'comfortable provision' for our families, by sacrificing our lives in the cause of humanity in the hope of procuring them £200 a year for a brief period with the brilliant prospect, if we perish or not, of earning one pound per day and a government ration. If the profession, as one body, do not resent this outrage, they deserve one and all the contemptuous estimate that has been made of them.¹⁰

The Persian Affair, however, was not over. Following Eckford's report on November 16 that the crew were all healthy, the ship was permitted to return to the Quarantine ground at Hobarton where it was visited by Benson on November 20. As no sickness had occurred for fourteen days, the Governor-in-Council released the ship from quarantine to enable it to discharge cargo and communicate with the city. However, between November 23 and November 25, eight members of the crew were taken to the General Hospital ill. Once again panic hit the city. Medical men differed as to the cause of their sickness. Requested by members of Parliament and some citizens to establish the identity of the disease, Hall visited the patients, two of whom he was sure were suffering from typhus fever, the rest showed milder symptoms. Fortunately, the disease did not spread to the citizens at large, but was confined to two or three

¹⁰ Courier, November 6, 1857 &
Daily News, November 9, 1857.

inmates of the Hospital, one of whom, a wardsman, died, whereupon the majority of the patients were moved to another building and the wards thoroughly disinfected.¹¹ In his "Health Report" for November, Hall declared that the people could thank favourable climatic conditions at the time for counteracting the spread of the disease, certainly not the precautionary wisdom of the ruling authorities and their medical advisers. It was not until February 1858, however, when Eckford and the last of the immigrants left Impression Bay, that the Persian Affair came to an end.

Undoubtedly, the authorities had learnt a hard lesson; when the immigrant vessel "Trade Winds" arrived in Storm Bay on February 22 with three hundred people on board and typhus fever and whooping cough prevailing, the Executive with commendable promptitude sent the vessel to the Quarantine Station at Impression Bay without permitting it to come into harbour.¹²

Hall's open, unrestrained, scathing attacks on Bedford, Milligan, Henty and the Executive, and some of his fellow professionals during the stirring, anxious days of the typhus fever crisis had cast him in a new role. Angered by the hostile indifference to his views in the Royal Society, and yet more than ever convinced of their correctness, he declared open warfare on all who opposed him. Above all, he was determined to establish the truth. On December 1, 1857, he wrote:

My faith is so firm in the omnipotent power of truth where there is free discussions and publicity that I am quite confident to whichever side it lies that it will ultimately prevail irrespective of personal or other prejudices.¹³

During the next twelve months his pen was untiring in its efforts, winning for him the title "the eternal scribbler, the eccentric Dr Hall". Such name-calling did not concern him; his style was confident and authoritative, displaying the statistician's insistence on the absolute accuracy of every detail. It was "woe betide" anyone reckless enough to challenge him, or foolish enough to publish incorrect data, for the inevitable result was an instant torrent of precisely detailed facts and figures to confound him. However galling it was to those who disliked him, Hall, nonetheless, constituted himself the city's guide and mentor. No other man in Hobarton at that time displayed less care for adverse

¹¹ Daily News, November 25 & 26, 1857.

¹² For a summary of the Persian Affair see CSD 1/162/4327.

¹³ Daily News, December 1, 1857.

public opinion or more energy, persistence and courage, although his enemies probably gave it the less kindly name of blatant egotism.

It was in this vein that Hall replied on December 1, 1857, to Bedford's letter of August 27 concerning the Orphan Schools, which had been published in the October number of the Australian Medical Journal. Bedford, restrained and courteous, though surprised and obviously hurt by Hall's criticisms, contended that the statistics given by Hall referred to only two years and partly a third, instead of covering an extended period like thirteen years. The high mortality in the years 1854-6, Bedford claimed, was due to two temporary causes, the admission of very young children, which was not customary and was now discontinued, and two epidemics. Moreover, he denied that any widespread dissatisfaction with the mortality at the Orphan Schools existed, and declared himself in favour of open discussions on the matter.

I am one of the last persons to wish that information as to public institutions should be withheld. I consider the well doing and safety of the inmates depends upon the open manner in which their operations are conducted; but to form a correct opinion the public must have the whole facts, not partial facts and misinformed opinions. I submit the enclosed tables (thirteen years) to assist anyone who may wish to know the facts and, if necessary, to ameliorate the sad conditions Mr Hall says exists.

Contrary to Hall's statements, Bedford insisted that diet and ventilation were not the cause of so many deaths, but the easy spread of disease amongst a large number of children confined closely together.¹⁴

To this, Hall replied scornfully and indignantly that Bedford's figures for thirteen years only proved his point the more, that the children died at the rate of 31 per 1000.

Why even on an average of 15 years in London, - at all ages, from the moment of birth to extreme old age - the rate has not been quite 25 per 1000 - though cholera, smallpox, and other diseases unknown here, had prevailed extensively. Why, heavy as was the mortality at all ages, within the city of Hobart Town, comparatively to London, in 1856 it only amounted to 28 $\frac{1}{2}$ per 1000.

What was far worse, the rate of mortality of Orphan School children, compared with country children in Tasmania was, on an average of thirteen successive years, 5 to 7 $\frac{1}{2}$ times greater. Accusing Bedford of "disgraceful parsimony" in doling out milk in tablespoonfuls to "perishing children", Hall called for an immediate enquiry by an

¹⁴ A.M.J., October 1857, pp. 306-308.

independent body.¹³ Obviously, when two aged, experienced doctors, both parents themselves, differed so widely in their estimation of the situation, there could eventually be only one outcome, one was right, the other wrong. That there were actually some grounds for Hall's suspicions concerning the amount and quality of the children's food was proved by the setting up of a Commission of Enquiry by the Executive Government on November 23, 1857, to hear charges against the Matron, Mrs Smyth, who was accused of using the meat served out for the children to make broth for herself, and of using their milk. However, the charges were not substantiated.¹⁵

Certainly, Hall was equally adept at both censure and praise if he thought either would benefit the welfare of the people. In the role of mentor, he always availed himself of the opportunity to express publicly his enthusiastic admiration for the virtues and achievements of remarkable men in an article which conveyed inspiration to others. Reading in the Lancet of August 15, 1857, of the death of Dr Marshall Hall, the inventor of the Marshall Hall method of restoring asphyxiated persons, he immediately forwarded an abstract of the leading article on the eminent physician to the Daily News

I have condensed the following abstract as my homage to a man whose name, whilst living, and ever since I commenced my own professional career, I have felt proud to bear; whom, as an ardent and honorable medical practitioner, as a zealous man of science, as a philanthropist above all petty and selfish views, I have regarded as a model whom every professor of the healing art ought to copy, and who, having now closed a useful and laudable course by a discovery of incalculable benefit to science and humanity - according well with a life so spent - I revere and honour in the grave.

He enclosed a full description of the Marshall Hall method in the hope that shopkeepers and publicans, especially round the wharves would paste up the directions in a position to be readily seen by all customers.¹⁶

Yet, to Milligan and Bedford Hall gave only condemnation. On January 2, 1858, he once again accused Milligan of secretarial inefficiency, of mis-statements and suppressions, of partial and inaccurate reporting, this time of the December meeting of the Royal Society at which he had entered a "protest" against Milligan's reporting of the special meeting of October 26.

¹³ Daily News, December 1, 1857.

¹⁵ H.A.P. 1859/72.

¹⁶ Daily News, January 1, 1858.

Were the business of this Society conducted as systematically and honorably as is that of the Mechanics' Institute and other kindred societies, the Secretary would keep a regular minute book of proceedings as Rule XXXIX prescribes that he should do. These minutes would be read at the commencement of every sitting of the Society and their accuracy confirmed or their errors corrected as the case might be. Until this was done, the Chairman's signature would not be affixed, or the minutes be considered as records of the Society.

He also accused Milligan of prompting Bedford to squash his protest by referring it to the Council of the Royal Society; of misrepresenting his statements concerning the salubrity of the climate; of publishing incorrect facts and figures connected with the Orphan School, the amount of gluten discovered in wheat, and even in Abbott's meteorological returns.

What will scientific men elsewhere think of the efficiency of our Royal Society after reading the specious and elaborate report of our secretary, with such unpardonable errors patent upon the face of it. How long will the Fellows permit such shameful blundering to continue unproved. Surely seventeen days' delay - in fact until after another meeting of the Society had taken place to confuse people's recollections - afforded ample time enough for the secretary to draw up a trustworthy and creditable report.¹⁷

¹⁷ Daily News, January 4, 1858.

CHAPTER 13

HEALTH REPORTS

In any society, if there is not recourse to wasteful violence, changes occur slowly and imperceptibly. More than anything else the social reformer needs patience and persistence. Both these two attributes were displayed by Hall during the first few months of 1858. The fearful anxiety associated with the typhus fever epidemic had subsided; even the first keen bite of disappointment he had suffered in the Royal Society was fading. It was a time for consolidating his position whilst awaiting a new opportunity to strike again, perhaps with a change in tactics. Meanwhile, he concentrated on his Health Reports now prominently displayed in the Daily News. These reports, though neither fully valued nor appreciated by the citizens, summarized the results of many hours of laborious observation and compilation by Abbott and Hall who worked together voluntarily, in a spirit of unselfish dedication to the interests of Public Health and Science, to establish the relationship between climatic conditions and health.

Two factors predominated in their findings: the colossally high rate of infant mortality in Hobarton and the immense fluctuations in barometric pressure and temperature which characterized the meteorological phenomena. Hall naturally linked the two together and allied them with a third, the carelessness of man. In his mortality statistics he found that a rising barometer with a falling thermometer was invariably followed by an increase in deaths both of adults and children. He explained in the February report:

On the 21st (January), between the 7 a.m. and 1 p.m. observations, the barometer fell .386, and between the 1 p.m. and sunset rose .550 or more than half an inch. Thus, in less than twelve hours the barometer varied twice to the opposite extremes about half an inch. This difference of nearly a quarter of a ton of atmospheric pressure upon the adult human body within so brief a period must have a serious effect upon health.

The records abounded with similar wide fluctuations.

The records of the 26th (January) give valuable information of the Tasmanian climate. With a moderate north wind at 7 a.m. the barometer was 29.963, the thermometer 63. At 1 p.m. the wind still north but very gentle, the barometer had fallen to 29.812, the thermometer risen to 94. At 4 p.m. the thermometer had attained the maximum of 97, when a light south-east or sea breeze set in, and at sunset the barometer was 29.781 and the thermometer 74. Thus in nine hours the thermometer rose 34 degrees and then fell 23 degrees in from two to three hours. The barometer fell .151 in the nine hours and then .059 in the latter period.

Hall considered that these remarkable variations in pressure and temperature called for special measures, particularly with children.

The rate of infant mortality was appalling, as Hall's analysis showed:

Of 26 deaths in December, 1857

11 were under 12 months old

7 were from 1 year old to 20.

Of 57 deaths in January, 1858

29 were under 12 months old

10 were from 1 year old to 15.

Of 62 deaths in February, 1858

32 were under 12 months old

14 were between 1 and 2 years old

2 were between 2 years old and 20.

Of 47 deaths in March, 1858

21 were under 12 months old

12 were between 1 and 2 years of age

3 were between 2 and 5 years of age

1 was between 5 and 15 years

1 was between 15 and 20 years.

Croup, convulsions, diarrhoea and dysentery were the main causes of death. In his "Health Report" for February, 1858, Hall attempted to explain the high incidence of death from convulsions.

Seventeen deaths from 'Convulsions' is greater than has been recorded for any month of the year during the last seven years. The nearest approach to it was in January 1857, when there were fourteen. In the "Report" read to the Royal Society for that month, I endeavoured to connect the great fatality from this cause at that time, with the frequent and wide fluctuations of atmospheric pressure as indicated by the barometer, combined with the daily changing state of temperature. I contended that these united influences were quite

sufficient to produce the disastrous effects recorded in tender infants recently ushered into existence and possessing in their highly organized and delicate skins so great an extent of surface, susceptible of atmospheric impressions, and the more so, because so many unreflecting parents clothe their babes from birth quite inadequately to withstand such varying temperature.

Also Hall strongly deprecated the pernicious habit of sending infants out of doors in the heat of the day with their heads imperfectly protected from the sun's rays, under the care of ignorant and careless nurses.

In spite of statements such as these, Hall was obviously bewildered by and deeply concerned at the state of affairs revealed by his own mortality figures. As the first person to draw attention publicly to the enormity of the death rate amongst new born infants, as compared with older children, he wrote in his "Health Report" for January, 1858,

This month's records exhibit a very characteristic example of the decreased rate of mortality, as influenced by advancing age in this colony; a subject very little attended to in general, even by those who ought to study the matter. Within the first month of life, seven died, within the second, none, within the third, two and so on. Between the first and second year of life, five only died, or seventeen times less in proportion than for the first month; between two and three years of age but one died, or five times less than from one to two; at from five to ten but two deaths occurred.

The statistics demonstrated that the high mortality rate in Hobarton, 28 per 1000, as compared with London's less than 25 per 1000, centred on the very young; improvement in this area was particularly necessary. However, in early 1858, Hall still saw the problem mainly in general terms, calling for an improved water supply, better sanitation, unadulterated food and the like.

Actually, Hall was becoming increasingly aware of the importance to health of a good diet. From November, 1857 to February, 1858, as the most enthusiastic and conscientious member of the Gluten Committee of the Royal Society, he analysed nearly seventy samples of Tasmanian wheats and flours, which he procured from all parts of the island. He was pleased to find that the average percentage of gluten in the whole was about $10\frac{1}{2}$, which proved Tasmanian flour to be of fair quality, although still only half as nutritious as European flour.¹ He also supported Alderman Murdoch in his efforts to prevent the sale for food of cattle and sheep dying on shipboard. At the same time, quietly and

¹ See Appendices and Courier, January 1 & 18, 1858.

unobtrusively, he investigated the diet scales of children in orphanages in Britain and Europe.²

On March 26, 1858, the Daily News published "Some Statistical Facts of 1857" which Hall had extracted from an article he had prepared for publication in one of the European scientific journals (probably the Journal of the Statistical Society of London). For anyone interested in the statistics of Tasmania in 1857, there were many fascinating "facts", unfortunately far too numerous to elaborate here. As Hall was chiefly concerned with the death rate in Hobart, his comment on that subject was significant.

The deaths of 1857 amounted to 1,432 in the whole population (of Tasmania), or one death to 56.90 individuals, or only a trifle more than $17 \frac{1}{2}$ per thousand, which is more than five per thousand less than that for all England. Further, the deaths for all the rural portions of the island, exclusive of the city of Hobart Town and the town of Launceston was only one in 78.47 inhabitants, or 13 per thousand. The rate for the rural population of England and Wales is 17 per thousand. On the other hand, the Hobart City deaths were $29 \frac{1}{2}$ per thousand, or, one death to 33.96 inhabitants, which is $7 \frac{1}{2}$ per thousand more than Dr Letheby, the Health Officer of London, gives for the last year's city mortality, and $4 \frac{1}{2}$ per thousand more than the average mortality of the whole Metropolis of England for 15 years, according to the calculation of Professor Guy of King's College. Hobart City mortality is also $4 \frac{1}{2}$ per thousand higher than that of Sydney was for the year ending 1st March 1857, as it is given by the Registrar-General of New South Wales. Of the 1,432 total deaths of 1857

343 were under 1 year old.
78 were between 1 and 2.
42 were between 2 and 3.
20 were between 3 and 4.
9 were between 4 and 5.
37 were between 5 and 10.
18 were between 10 and 15.
24 were between 15 and 20.

making a total number, under 20 years of age, of 571, a sadly disproportionate number.

The rate of mortality amongst convicts, Hall found, had not materially differed for many years and was much less - about 11 per thousand - than ruled amongst the free population of the same ages -

a convincing proof of the efficacy of sanitary care, in promoting health and longevity.

² Daily News, February 9, 1858.

Yet, Hall's article concluded on a note of optimism and rejoicing; he found that the Zymotic class of diseases, which was that most influenced by atmospheric and local impurities, had gradually but considerably diminished in Hobartton since 1853, when there were 123 deaths in this group, to 100 in 1856, and only 84 in 1857. This was an encouraging result for Municipal authorities and should spur them on to increased exertions in the sanitation of the city.

In April, 1858, the Australian Medical Journal published the fourth and concluding part of Hall's article "On the Medical Topography and Vital Statistics of Hobartton, Tasmania, and its southern Sub-Districts for 1855." Although in this section Hall primarily wished to discuss the diseases prevalent in Tasmania in 1855, as he had previously intimated in Part III, he, nevertheless, devoted the first half to refuting professionally Bedford's letter in the Australian Medical Journal. Angrily, indignantly, but precisely, Hall attacked one by one Bedford's comments and objections, excusing himself on the grounds that the importance of the subject, his own honour, and the position of the objector demanded that he do so. Actually, it was a devastating attack on the professionalism of a man who obviously had little acquaintance with the subtleties of statistical argument and their implications with respect to acceptable standards of health and mortality.

Dr Bedford seems to be quite unconscious that, when giving from his own selected thirteen years calculations, an annual mean rate of mortality for the Orphan School, of rather above three per cent (31 per thousand) for children, who for five years out of the thirteen were all upwards of three years old; for the other five, all above two years old; and for the last three years, with one solitary exception, all more than one year old, that the rate is enormous, when compared with that which usually prevails in Europe, in children of a corresponding age, and still more disproportionate when compared with the ratio of mortality in children in Tasmania.

According to his own analysis of deaths at the Orphan School, taken from the Hobart Town Registry, 271 children had died from 1841-1857 inclusive, on an average daily strength of 400 children, which is 4 per cent or 40 per 1000

a rate which I venture to point out is without parallel in any well conducted establishment in Europe.

Even this, Hall considered too favourable a view, considering the ages of the children.

Hall's words, in fact, pinpointed the remarkable difference in attitude between the two doctors: Bedford, more conservative, in medical charge of the Orphan Schools for sixteen years, was personally aggrieved at Hall's criticisms, seeing no reason for anxiety at the death rate, which he considered the normal outcome of nuisance epidemics, nor any need to improve the children's diet and conditions; in contrast, Hall, the progressive student of all new ideas in science and medicine, was deeply concerned at what he knew was a major problem, as he sought the basic causes of death and the means of prevention. He felt the answer was in the children's food. Basing his calculations on the amount of food necessary to keep the body of a full grown man in condition, as determined by the work of Professor Johnson, an Agricultural chemist; on the universally accepted idea in the colony that more food was required in Tasmania to support a healthy life owing to the climate; and on the fact that Tasmanian flours, usually grown on unmanured soils, had been proved only half as nourishing as European flours, he argued that, all other articles of the diet scale remaining the same, one pound of flesh meat per day, or its equivalent in other nitrogenous aliments, should be the allowance for every child above six years old

to prevent them wasting away so numerously from marasmus and kindred diseases, and to give them more stamina, so as to enable them to withstand epidemic visitations on equal terms with the children in the colony at large.

In characteristic style, he condemned the ease with which the Matron had purloined the children's food, yet escaped punishment. He concluded his reply to Bedford with a challenge:

- . I cannot possibly think the responsible authorities of the Queen's Orphan School, properly aware of their trusts, or faithful in the discharge of them, while the mortality continues to be - even in Dr Bedford's own showing - upwards of three per cent, or six times greater than that of children of the same age, at the same time, during the same epidemics, in the same salubrious country districts and in the great majority, of the same class. When they are even brought to a par in point of mortality, I shall not be able conscientiously to admit that any great merit will be due.

In the second half of the article Hall compared the number of deaths from various diseases in Hobarton with those recorded in London. In croup, diarrhoea, dysentery, dropsy, cancer, hydrocephalus apthalites, apoplexy, paralysis, delirium tremens, convulsions, pneumonia, diseases of the stomach, liver, and other organs of digestion, in deaths from

teething, quincy, gastritis, enteritis, hepatitis, jaundice, the numbers were above the London rate. On the other hand, in syphilis, fever, consumption, bronchitis, asthma, peritonitis, diseases of the kidneys, rheumatism, diseases of the bones, joints, premature births and debility, the numbers were less.

In the course of his comparisons, Hall offered some significant observations; measles, scarlatina and whooping cough were epidemic in nature and caused many deaths; croup, though not found in country areas, was a terrible scourge to Hobart children, the rate of death being four times greater than in London. "Formidable, indeed," too, was the number of deaths, 78, in Hobart in 1855, from convulsions. Hall strongly believed this was due either to the inhalation of an atmosphere charged with tobacco smoke at the earliest periods, to the usually impure air of the ill-ventilated lying-in chamber, or to the reckless exposure of infants to the widely varying changes of the atmosphere. Diarrhoea also caused death at a rate $12\frac{1}{2}$ times greater to population than in London. Influenza was not an epidemic disease in 1855, whilst the incidence of cancer was also slight; heart disease was somewhat higher in Tasmania than in London. Of all maladies, intemperance, either directly or indirectly formed a very large portion of adult deaths. Hall, himself, was particularly interested in his findings on "consumption".

It appears from the most pains-taking research for three years, that the native born of Tasmania are exempt to a very surprising extent, from the ravages of a disease, which is by far the most fatal of all causes of death in England.

In fact, in Hobart, a smaller mortality in comparison with London was noticeable from all diseases of the lungs and other organs of respiration, due no doubt to the drier climate. Hall's words were jubilant:

To have established such a glorious fact in favour of Tasmania, I think an ample reward for the time and trouble I have taken to ascertain it Until I brought this matter under the notice of my Medical brethren, none of them had been aware of it, and many doubted whether it would be confirmed by a more extended examination. Had any of them felt desirous of investigating the question for themselves, the official data were so obscure and unsatisfactory, that only those labouring under the cacoethes statisticum would have had the courage and patience to have explored and arranged the records.

In fact, Hall was highly critical in this article of the methods used by the authorities to collect, condense and elucidate the materials for the study of vital statistics. He considered they were an "age in arrears", especially in the obsolete and imperfect method of taking the population census. Previous to his own compilations, there were no tables of the slightest value existing, nor did he see much evidence of any desire for improvement.³ He appealed to Medical Practitioners to adopt the habit of giving a death certificate in accordance with the English form; only by obtaining such satisfactory data could sanitary science achieve easily the results desired. Hall, the statistician, who had spent so many hours in dedicated research and compilation, concluded his long series of articles, rightly enough, with a plea for understanding of the statist:

It is by the practical application of knowledge so required, that science can promote the interests of humanity, and no real philanthropist will throw obstacles in the way of the statist or regard his labours with apathy, much less distrust, or affected derision.

³ Changes in the method of making Census Returns were first suggested to Colonial-Secretary, T. Gregson, by Hall on March 18, 1857, just before the Census of March 31 of that year, but nothing was done.

CHAPTER 14

THE SANITARIUM FOR INDIA AFFAIR

Hall's assiduous study of publications, such as the Australian Medical Journal, Lancet, The British Medical Journal, The Medical Times and Gazette, The British and Foreign Medical and Chirurgical Review, The Journal of the Statistical Society of London, The Builder, British Parliamentary Reports and the like, most of which were displayed for public perusal at the Mechanics' Institute, had extended his knowledge of vital statistics and sanitary principles far beyond that of his less diligent contemporaries. Since he always endeavoured to apply his knowledge to the circumstances in his own city, this difference in understanding naturally produced further conflict in new areas. In April, 1858, he became involved in the Sanitarium for India Affair.

For many years the British Government had toyed with the idea of establishing a sanitarium for invalided British soldiers in India. The suitability of Tasmania for such a hospital was first mooted as long ago as 1836-7 when the Lancet reviewed an article by T.E. Dempster, "The Climate of Tasmania as a Resort for Invalids from India", which was published in the seventh volume of the Transactions of the Medical Society of Calcutta. Dempster spoke in glowing terms of the colony and its healthy climate.¹ Public interest in the idea was further aroused in Tasmania in 1858, when D.T. Kilburn, a resident magistrate in the colony, wrote to the Times, describing the hygienic advantages of the island as a resort for invalids. Hall was most interested. On April 13, he wrote to the Under-Secretary of State at the War Office, soliciting an appointment as Sanitary Officer in the event of a Sanitarium being established in Tasmania or any other of the Australian colonies.²

The idea of a Sanitarium for India in Tasmania quickly gained momentum. In response to public request, on July 1, 1858, Young

¹ Lancet, 1836-7, V. 11, p. 309.

² Hall Papers, NS 308/2.

appointed a Board of Commissioners

to consider the probable benefits which would result from the establishment in Tasmania of a Military Medical Sanitarium, and Post for Convalescents

and to demonstrate the advantages the island offered for such a purpose. The Commission comprised nine members whose social position carried great weight in the community: they were the President of the Commission, Lieutenant-Colonel Hamilton, the colonel commanding the Royal Engineers; Lieutenant-Colonel T. Hungerford of the Bengal Artillery, a comparative stranger to the island on a visit from India; Major W.J. Hutchins, the officer in command of the detachment of the 12th Regiment in Hobarton; R. Douglas, Deputy Military Storekeeper; S. Owen, Assistant Commissary General; Lieutenant J.E. Cornes, a young officer of the Royal Engineers on service in Tasmania for only a short period; W. Nairn, the Comptroller-General of Convicts and Sheriff; E.S.P. Bedford, a surgeon whose medical experience was confined to Hobarton; and R. Pitcairn, the only unofficial member of the Board and a highly respected legal practitioner.

The Commission's report was presented on August 2, 1858, in an elaborate, printed quarto "Report" of forty-four pages, which included numerous tables, some lithographed diagrams, and minutes of examinations of witnesses. On application to the Governor, Hall was courteously supplied with one of the hundred copies printed. Although he was already concerned at the Board's composition, he was, nonetheless, extremely shocked by the "Report", which threw into bold relief the disparity which existed between his mode of thought and that of the Commission on Health and Sanitation.

Hall voiced his protest in two articles: the first, a lengthy "Review" of the Commission's Report, which was published in the Mercury on August 12, and later republished in the October number of the Australian Medical Journal; the second, an article "Military Hospitals in Tasmania" written in January, 1859, and published in the English magazine, The Builder, on April 9, 1859.³

In The Builder Hall described his feelings at the time:

Believing, as I do, from upwards of five and twenty years' medical experience in this colony, and fourteen years more, previously, in England and Ireland, that this island offers

³ The Builder, April 9, 1859, pp. 248-249.

many peculiar advantages to invalids from India; I was chagrined beyond measure when I found how seriously the commissioners had failed in proving it, and I lost no time in endeavouring to counteract their errors in the proper quarters.

In the October number of the Australian Medical Journal published in Melbourne, I reviewed the commissioners' report at length, and did my best to advance the interests of Tasmania, of science, and of humanity, by a candid exposition of the real advantages this island possesses for establishing a "sanitarium for India".

Hall's "Review" which occupied twenty-seven pages in the journal, was a courageous and remarkable achievement, which established him as a mature sanitarian whose attitude was international and global rather than national and parochial.

The preservation of human health, the prolongation of human life, binds every sanitary reformer in one indissoluble link, whatever may be their country, condition or creed. All are cosmopolitans. No real sanitarian will swerve one line from his honorable course to truckle to the behests of any Nebuchadnezzar, or to worship the golden image of self interest. Zeal may outrun knowledge, for to err is human; but to love their neighbours as themselves, as the majority of sanitarians show that they do, is to embody the essence of christianity.⁴

Although very much in Hobart society Hall was also above and beyond it. Although his only contact with other sanitarians was by correspondence and literature, his extraordinary ability to think objectively, strengthened by his religious beliefs and his integrity, gave him the confidence, the courage, the audacity, the determination, and the skill necessary to pit himself alone in a small isolated city against the judgment of the Board of Commissioners appointed by the Executive authority, and to declare them to the world guilty of great errors.

Unfortunately, scarcely a statement was made, a table given, a conclusion drawn, or a proposition advanced that was not flagrantly erroneous.⁵

Considering the importance of the issue at stake - the very nature of Tasmania itself - and the influential position of the nine Commissioners, the fact that Hall's "Review" was published "in toto" twice proved the strength and efficacy of his attack. As a result the Executive and the Commissioners learnt in no uncertain terms of the folly of their out-moded ideas and of their ignorance of modern sanitary science. Unfortunately

⁴ A.M.J., October 1858, p. 287.

⁵ The Builder, April 9, 1859, p. 248.

no details of their reactions remain; either they ignored Hall's protests or suffered their punishment in silence.

In his "Review" Hall examined meticulously, paragraph by paragraph, the sanitary aspects of the report, in which alone he was interested, bestowing impartially both censure and praise as he considered them due. Firstly he criticized the Board itself, the composition of which he compared to that of the very successful Royal Army Sanitary Commission in England: whereas in the latter the Commissioners were chosen for their enthusiasm and special knowledge of sanitary science, five out of nine being members of the Medical Profession, in Tasmania seven members were receiving imperial pay; not one of the nine members had ever publicly shown any special knowledge of vital statistics and sanitary science or any interest in sanitary improvement.

Had there been but one individual on this Commission familiar with vital statistics, and acquainted with the principles and progress of sanitary reform up to the present time, it could not have happened that the grievous errors and pernicious recommendations, so patent on the face of their "Report", could have been promulgated.⁶

Hall then criticized, at some length, the type of evidence used to establish the salubrity of the Tasmanian climate. Here in his own favourite subject, he was in his element, accusing Bedford, who was the author of the section on climate, of gross and ridiculous errors.

In a document so pretentious, and so deeply affecting the climatic character of our favoured Isle the latest and best evidence ought to have been embodied, and not merely partial results, arrived at ten years ago.⁷

He maintained that for some years past, as all careful observers knew, the annual mean temperature and extremes, and diurnal ranges had greatly increased, the mean of the last three years being nearly four degrees higher than that of the eight the Commissioners had adopted. He suggested that if none of the members of the Board had the skill or the zeal enough to choose the correct meteorological Tables, they should have approached Abbott as

he could and no doubt would, for the credit of Tasmania, have supplied tables much more suitable for the purpose required, brought down to the present period and registered with more, and as good meteorological instruments as were ever used at the Royal Observatory at Rossbank, near Hobarton⁸

⁶ A.M.J., October 1858, p. 286.

⁷ Ibid, p. 288.

⁸ Ibid, p. 290.

He considered neither Hobarton nor Launceston suitable for a sanitarium owing to their heavy mortality rates:

No possible advantages supposed to be obtainable from the housing and accommodation in Hobarton can outweigh the serious drawback which its heavy mortality proves.⁹

Hall was especially critical of the Board's remarks concerning the mortality of the troops in Tasmania, declaring them so erroneous that the authorities in England would see at once the Commissioners were not competent to conduct the enquiry on this point. Here, for the first time, he discussed at length their circumstances and conditions, revealing that the mortality rate amongst them was higher, and their standard of health lower than that of the convicts, due to the poor standard of accommodation provided and the poor diet.

That the quartering of British soldiers with their wives and children, even in the rural districts of this Island, has been not less disgusting and immoral than that decreed by the English Commissioners, I know full well, from my long period of service in the Government Medical Staff. More than once I have been necessitated for decency's sake to request all the men in a crowded barrack room to leave their beds in the middle of a severe winter's night, while I delivered the wives of some of their number. Hard as it was upon the men, I am glad to testify that my wishes were always complied with.¹⁰

Hall, too, had much to say about the buildings: the Female House of Correction, the Comptroller-General's Office, the Military Stores and the like, which were suggested as suitable accommodation for the invalids from India. He summed up his remarks

The 453 brave sufferers who might be subjects to such illiberal and unwise arrangements for their welfare, would absolutely have less space allowed them than the minimum Barrack allowance so loudly and so unanimously condemned in England. Such a provision would go far to re-enact the hospital horrors of the Russian War and Hobarton Military Invalid Sanitariums might rival the mortality of the "Scutari" pesthouse.¹¹

However, he felt there was little likelihood of this happening, as the errors in the "Report" were too glaring to enable it to stand up to examination by able statisticians and sanitarians in England; in short the Commissioners had done Tasmania a great injustice. Scathingly,

⁹ Ibid, p. 291.

¹⁰ Ibid, p. 310.

¹¹ Ibid, p. 307.

he commented that any of the visitors to the reading room of the Mechanics' Institute, habitually scanning the contents of the various periodicals provided, could have avoided the "lamentable" errors so patent in the Commission's "Report".

In a broad study of this kind, it is not possible to discuss any further Hall's contentions, fascinating though they were. Almost every sentence of his "Review" was pregnant with meaning, making it a document of great historical interest. His concluding words revealed him as the great "Tasmanian" he was:

The British Government has been forced by the pressure of public opinion to investigate questions of so much importance to the national safety. It is humiliating enough to Tasmanian Colonists to find how we lag behind in the matter. Such a "Report" as our Tasmanian Commissioners have put forth to the world will not, I am sure, in the opinion of European sanitarians, tend much to establish our just claim to the Australian motto, we are so fond of repeating "Advance Tasmania". Those, however, who feel the keenness of the reproach must, one and all, take pains to shift the odium from their own reputation, by repudiating all sympathy with acts so injurious to the good name of Tasmania.¹²

In his second, shorter article "Military Hospitals in Tasmania" Hall discussed in detail the most "unpardonable and mischievous error of all" perpetrated by the Commission. This was the suggestion that the four rooms which comprised the Military Stores on the wharf offered good accommodation for 300 men, possibly 450 if the necessity arose. Hall maintained that, in the latter case, each invalid would have 388 cubic feet of breathing room, as compared with the 2,100 cubic feet recommended by The Builder in a recent article "On the Sites and Constructions of Hospitals".

Once again, however, the Sanitarium for India Affair came to nothing. Some twelve months later, Hall received a letter from the Director-General of the Army Medical Department in London, dated July 16, 1859, which stated that the British Government did not intend to establish a sanitarium at present; at the same time the Director expressed his appreciation of Hall's deep interest and thanked him for the valuable information he had forwarded.¹³ Nevertheless, in Tasmania itself, the incident could not be so easily dismissed, More than

¹² Ibid, p. 311-312.

¹³ Hall Papers, NS 308/2.

anything else, the Commission's "Report" and Hall's subsequent protest underlined the sharp distinction existing between the old ways of thought and the new ideas in sanitary science. It remained for the Executive authority to make the choice: if it were not to be labelled an anachronism in government, it must concede to Hall.

By the winter of 1858 the force and momentum of Hall's attack on the poor conditions in Hobarton were increasing; his pen was never idle; his style was precise, decisive and convincing; he knew he spoke the truth and he spoke it with authority. He corresponded with the Municipal Council concerning the inadequacies and dangers of the water supply;¹⁴ on the occasion of the Queen's Birthday, he contributed a long article to the Daily News on English vital statistics, which he compared to those of Tasmania;¹⁵ he also contributed another article, "On the Excessive Mortality in Tasmania in the first quarter of 1858", to the July number of the Australian Medical Journal.¹⁶ In addition, he assisted in the establishment of a Servants' Home and, aided by five other doctors, addressed a petition to the House of Assembly, protesting that the proposed site of the new cemetery - on part of the Domain - was not suitable and would be prejudicial to the Public Health, and recommending the site proposed by Denison near Cornelian Bay.¹⁷ From time to time, he wrote to the press to urge the council to improve the sewage and drainage which was still so defective that he was able to write on August 20, 1858,

As a medical man, I need scarcely advert to the sanitary importance of a free and thorough drainage of a city like Hobart Town, where in many localities masses of inhabitants are huddled together, closely packed in crowded habitations, with no means of drainage whatever, and who are consequently compelled to cast a vast quantity of filth either into their yards or into the streets to the imminent peril of the population by the propagation of sickness from the foul miasma thus pestilentially generated.¹⁸

On June 1, 1858, Hall ended his long, close association with his friend and ally Miller, who ceased publication of the Daily News. It had been a fruitful partnership. Fortunately the Mercury was sympathetically inclined and stepped into the breach.

¹⁴ Daily News, May 14, 1858.

¹⁵ Daily News, May 24, 1858.

¹⁶ A.M.J., July, 1858, pp. 165-178.

¹⁷ H.A.P., 1859/32.

¹⁸ Mercury, August 20, 1858.

CHAPTER 15

THE ORPHAN SCHOOLS

It is the number of orphans and destitute children which there is in the colony - Surely, our young Tasmanians are worth cherishing in their early days when in helpless infancy they are bereaved of their parents. The number of poor, destitute orphans is really deplorable, we may add unexampled, and the ship "Sir Charles Forbes" had added thereto, by the children (one an infant) of those women who died on the passage. These poor little innocents who lost their mothers soon after the birth of some of them, and whose fathers are either dead, or cannot be found, are thrown on a strange land, without a friend and without an asylum to receive them, except the Colonial Hospital.

....An Orphan School is necessary for the protection, instruction and support of poor, destitute and helpless orphans.

Thus wrote the Colonial Times in its sub-leader on January 12, 1827. Although the Orphan School was established in good faith by the Government in response to statements such as this, the problem of the orphan children remained as a sore thorn in the Executive flesh for many years. On April 23, 1839, the Colonial Times severely criticized the management of the children, accusing the Government of a "mistaken system of parsimonious economy": whilst the outward appearance of the building was pleasing, the interior was not so; the children's apartments were cold, comfortless and ill-arranged; the washing places were highly objectionable, being cell-like places paved with flags, open at both ends with a stone trough in the centre; the prevalence of stone pavements was detrimental to health; there was no fire and the children were blue with the cold; even the playgrounds were too exposed and unsheltered. The paper described the general appearance as one of abjectness and squalor.

We have seen many assemblages of children in our time, both at home and abroad, but never did we see two hundred human beings, that exhibited so squalid an appearance, as did the majority of the Queen's Orphans.

It recommended the Government to abandon its rigid economy and pay more attention to the comfort of the poor, helpless, friendless beings thereby supported.

By the late 1850s, in spite of small improvements in the buildings, the children's diet, clothing and the like, Hall's mortality figures showed that the essential problem of the children's health still remained unsolved. Although his previous efforts succeeded only in rousing Bedford's antagonism, Hall was still determined to solve the problem of the exceedingly high death rate. Throughout the year 1858 he showed his increasing concern for the children, and his anger at Bedford's management of them in almost every article he wrote. On May 19, 1858, he restated the situation in "Soldiers in England : Orphans in Tasmania".

On an average of thirteen years, as admitted by its own medical officer in the Australian Medical Journal of October, 1857, and republished in the Hobart Town Advertiser of the 23rd September, last - there has been an annual mortality six times greater than that of the children of the same age in the country districts of the colony. The Registrar-General's returns for 1855 and 1856, which were called for in Parliament by Honorable Mr Kermode and printed give indisputable proof of this - In 1855 the deaths at the Orphan School were thirteen times greater than that of children of the same age in the country.

As he sought an answer to the riddle, Hall was very impressed with the findings of the English Royal Army Commissioners who, in part, ascribed the excessive military mortality to the soldiers being fed day after day on boiled beef without any change.

- Physiologists have long enough shown that such a practice is most injurious - that the stomach revolts against the unvarying sameness of such a diet - that however nutritious in quality and ample in quantity the food may be, its nutriment would not be assimilated, from the nausea and distaste excited by the daily repetition of the same article of food cooked in the same way, and that much of it would be rejected from the system without adding to support the strength of the body.

When he applied this line of reasoning to the orphan children, he was appalled at what he found.

In that establishment until very recently, up to fourteen years of age, the children were allowed, day after day, for 362 days of the year, no other food than dry bread and weak tea, morning and evening; and for dinner as mess, made from the miserable $\frac{1}{4}$ lb. meat (less the tolls it had previously paid to matrons and other officers), $\frac{1}{4}$ lb. vegetables, broken bread and the occasional scraps of broken

meat - returned in lieu of the 2-4 lbs. meat daily subtracted - all stewed together and seasoned with salt. On a Sunday they got a suet pudding extra.

Hall maintained that it was not surprising that bushells of this nauseating mess daily went to the pigs. He called them

sneaking, inhuman wretches, who, under the cloak of an anonym, advance the latter fact as a proof of the superfluous abundance of the children's food.

He disclosed that for some months past, the children had their meat baked or roasted on Sunday so that now they looked forward with anxious yearning to the next Sunday. Hall concluded the article with yet another scolding attack on Bedford - was his influence exercised for the plunderer or the plundered? - and another appeal to the Public to bestir themselves on behalf of the orphans.

Let us therefore not bestow our sympathies alone on men-soldiers - those who can speak for themselves - but with one voice unite to demand for these wretched children nature's rights. Let us concur in one stirring appeal to Parliament for an independent and competent Commission to investigate the treatment these children receive, and the cruelties inflicted upon them in an institution hallowed by the name of charity. Until we do this the world may point the finger of scorn at us, when we pretend to pass our own shores for objects of commiseration, and truly tell us to pluck the mote out of our own eye before we attempt to remove the beam from our neighbours.¹

In the new year Hall was horrified to find no improvement whatsoever in the mortality rate in 1858, although he had first drawn attention to the need for reform as long ago as the Convict Enquiry in 1855. He, therefore, concentrated all his attention on the problem, determined to succeed this time against Bedford. Realizing the seriousness of the confrontation awaiting him, he prepared his case carefully, sparing neither time nor labour to do so. On January 20, 1859, he took the only course now open to him: he wrote to the Colonial-Secretary on the "fearfully immense waste of life" at the Orphan Schools, which he attributed to hygienic mismanagement and an inadequate supply of nitrogenous foods, monotonously cooked. Of the 90 children in the school who were under the age of 7, 17 had died in 1858, being at the rate of 187 per 1000 per annum. After giving the vital statistics in detail, Hall "implored" the Colonial-Secretary

in the name of humanity to lose no time in causing this momentous matter to be strictly and impartially investigated by competent persons and the remedy promptly applied.²

¹ Daily News, May 21, 1858.

² For the Commission of Enquiry:
Correspondence and Evidence CSD 1/87/1655
Report L.C.J. 1860/26

Although Hall's letter did not reach the Governor but was forwarded to the Comptroller-General who made no reply, it did, nonetheless, have some effect; both the Colonial-Secretary and the Treasurer expressed to Young their opinion that the Orphan Schools were in a condition to justify a complaint by the colony against the Imperial Government. So distressed was Young by what he saw on a personal visit to the Schools that on March 29 he immediately and rather indignantly sent a memo to the Comptroller-General, suggesting some alterations in the children's management. This memo, which confirmed Hall's statements over the years, is given here in its complete form.

The rations issued of meat to the children are, I learned last Sunday, 4 ozs per diem, inclusive of bone. This when cooked is about 3 ozs. and is not sufficient for growing boys and girls from ten years and upwards. The meat is always mutton which except on Sunday is invariably boiled and served in broth which it is natural that the appetite of children should weary of.

Why should it not occasionally - viz once or twice a week be beef or mutton served without washy soup.

It is very essential that these children who are not likely to have the habits of cleanliness, nicety or decency by nature, should have them inculcated during their residence at a Public Establishment, as far as may be attainable. To this end, I suggest alterations on the following points

1. That pudding, meat, potatoes, salt etc. should not be put (as I saw last Sunday) altogether on one tin plate: either give them a change of plate once a week or a plate with a division in it.
2. That both girls and boys be allowed a garment to sleep in and not wear the same by day and night.
3. That decent and separated privies be supplied and for the promotion of health the present drainage requires improvement: offensive smells have existed to my knowledge for four years and should be entirely remedied: they have recently been but partially removed.
4. Permanent and efficient means should be taken to store up and increase the supply of water. Besides the creek water, the immense extent of roof, if guttered, would give an ample supply of pure water if saved, and the natural fall of the land facilitate sewerage. The original plan for sewerage should be looked into or verified by exploration.
5. The children did not appear well dressed even on Sunday - not as well as usual and I was informed the clothing material was three months overdue. Why is this ? One pair of stockings is worn for six months by the girls

In reply Nairn expressed ignorance of any reasons for complaint and his willingness to effect any desirable alterations. Obviously, the responsibility for any mismanagement rested not with the Executive authority, which was willing enough to make improvements if suggested, but with those who were personally responsible on the spot for its well-being; in fact, with Bedford. Brought face to face at last with the problem, the Governor established a Commission of Enquiry to examine all aspects of the Orphan Schools.

As he was unaware of these reactions and had received no acknowledgement of his letter of January 20, Hall addressed a second letter of much greater length to the Colonial Secretary on April 20, in which he supplemented his previous statements by additional facts and comparisons made between the Orphan Schools in Hobart and institutions such as the Benevolent Asylum in Sydney and the Royal Military Orphan Asylum in Chelsea.

The improved diet scale adopted by Dr Graham Balfour I have carefully compared with that in use at the Queen's Orphan School, calculating minutely the relative nutritive value of the ingredients in each. The absolute weight of the solid articles of the diet differ but little, the Orphan School being 202 1/2 ounces per week, or 28 6/7 ounces per day, that of the Chelsea Asylum a trifle less, or 195 1/2 ozs per week, or 27 6/7 ozs per day. But the daily allowance of milk in the latter is 11 3/7 ozs. while in the Orphan School, it is only 4 ozs. The real nutritive value, however, of the Royal Military Asylum ration - as might be expected from the much larger allowance of flesh meat - greatly exceeds that of the New Town establishment. In both scales, the watery constituents of the solid food amounts to somewhat more than half the gross weight of the viands. Assuming that the bread on the English scale is only of equal nutritive value with the Tasmanian, there is in the whole of the week's supply of food - milk included - 22 3/4 ozs of nitrogenous or flesh making nutriment in the former, to 15 1/2 ozs in the latter. This difference of more than 33% is sufficient to account for much of the excess in the mortality of the Tasmanian orphans. In the non-nitrogenous portions of the food, those that make fat and supply combustion etc., the Tasmanian proportion is 85 ozs. to 65 1/4 for the Chelsea Asylum.

Hall considered it unnatural and unphysiological to confine growing children of widely different ages to one unvarying scale by weight of daily food - the child of one to two years could not eat the same as a boy of fourteen. He firmly advocated a policy hitherto unknown in the history of the Orphan Schools -

....an unlimited daily supply of plain, wholesome and nutritious food, not cooked in the same way for two days

together. Joints of meat to be brought to table and the children served according to their wants. No official to have it in his power to treat as an act of criminality a request to be helped a second or even a third time at meals. During the intervals of meals, any child that asks for it ought to be promptly supplied with a slice of dry bread.

Hall believed that no child, unless diseased, if treated this way, would either eat too little or too much of simple, nutritious, palatable foods. This was the practice he had adopted with great success many years ago in Liverpool - it was now being used in almost all orphanages overseas. To assist in the planning of the children's dietary, he enclosed a daily scale of the foods required, together with a lengthy discussion of the merits and defects of certain kinds of foodstuffs.

The starch principle in the old New Town allowance preponderates greatly too much - even in the carbonaceous portion - over the saccharine, oleaginous and acidulous. For healthy assimilation they must bear a due proportion - A person fed on bread alone can suffer from scurvy and other such like diseases of innutrition.

Hall begged the Executive not to allow the matter to fall into oblivion again, nor the evils at the Orphans Schools to continue.

I have taken great pains to lay this matter before you in a clear and comprehensive manner, because I am certain that the official authority you wield would enable you, were it efficiently exercised, to save about 14 out of the 16 lives that have been annually sacrificed, on an average for the last 18 years in the Orphan School.

In its length, in the force of the comparisons it instituted, and in the wide knowledge of modern dietary principles which it propounded, Hall's letter was very convincing, revealing the intensity of his feelings for the welfare of the orphan children. On April 25, the Governor responded accordingly, saying he had read the letter with very great interest and wished to thank Hall for his suggestions; he recommended the letter with its enclosed documents, including a copy of the report of the Army Sanitary Commission, to the Commissioners who were advised to invite Hall to give evidence at the enquiry.

For a few, short moments it seemed that the old tide of convictism had turned at last. But it was not to be so easy. When the composition of the Board of Enquiry was announced, Hall's elation was sadly dampened: contrary to his expressed wish for a competent and impartial body, the Board consisted of seven members, W. Henty, J. Agnew, F. Innes, W. Nairn, W. Benson and E.S.P. Bedford, of whom five were Government officers, two of their number, Nairn and Bedford, being implicated in Hall's charges of mismanagement.

Of this body the Mercury was later to write on August 13 with some disgust:

In the formation of such commissions there is always this danger that the interested element will preponderate, thus giving, or securing a particular bias to suit the parties interested. In no case has this been more marked than in the recent enquiry into the state of the Queen's Orphan Schools; Hygienic and Dietetic - who composed the commission ? - not of men, known to the public for their moral worth and integrity, but of those subservient to, or politically dependent upon, one of the body, and upon whom the whole gravamen of Hall's charges appeared to rest

In spite of his disapproval Hall decided to give evidence, fearful that any refusal to cooperate might lead to further postponement, or an insufficiency of the necessary reforms. The Board of Enquiry opened its investigations in the Colonial-Secretary's office on May 9, 1859, its purpose to enquire into the supply and preparation of food, ventilation, drainage and water supply, accommodation, the state of repair, organization, and the direction of the establishment and the management of the children.

Under these circumstances it was hardly likely that the Board would receive Hall's evidence in an amicable state of mind. Bedford, a member of Parliament and an extremely busy man, was becoming progressively irritated by the whole affair. In a letter to the Comptroller-General on April 30, in which he reiterated his previous denials of any mismanagement, he could not refrain from expressing his displeasure at the Government's latest attitude.

I cannot conclude this letter without expressing a hope that a fearless discharge of duty, and incurring responsibility when the Government required it at my hands, is not to be met by the Government encouraging slanderous attacks upon the manner in which the Medical Duties have been discharged at the Queen's Orphan Schools. If the imputations in Mr Hall's attacks upon this institution (which he has continued for some time) were true, it was the duty of the Government long ago to have set the matter right; if not correct, a repetition of such attacks should not subject me to the trouble of answering them.

According to the Comptroller-General, the Orphan Schools were regularly visited by the successive Medical Officers of the military service who filled the situation of Principal Medical Officer for the convict establishments in the colony, and not once had they suggested that the scale of diet authorized for the children was inadequate. Neither the Government nor Bedford, as they sought in their bewilderment and

confusion to free themselves from blame, were in a position to know that they were, in reality, the puppets of the advancement of medical and scientific knowledge and its consequence, social change.

In his examination on June 15, Hall contrasted the conditions at the Orphan Schools in Tasmania with those found in the Cheltenham Female Orphan School, The Military Orphan School at Chelsea, The Sydney Benevolent Asylum and the Brixton Hill Orphanage in London. With the exception of the Benevolent Asylum, his figures were taken from the Statistical Society's Journal for 1858. Essentially, he argued that there was a greater wastage of food from the human body in Tasmania owing to more frequent circulation and respiration due to the purity of the air; hence a greater quantity of food was required. He proposed that the children be given a balanced diet of carbonic and nitrogenous foods in the proportion of three to one, the amount to be 43 ounces of solid food daily supplemented by 120 ounces of milk per week.

On June 18, Bedford and Benson, both members of the Commission, were also examined by their associates. Bedford disclosed that he, himself, had made some effort to improve the children's diet. When he first took charge, the children were not in a good state of health, and during the scarlet fever epidemic in 1843 the mortality was very high: at that time, the amount of food supplied was the same as now, but its distribution was very poor - on two days a week dinner was a lump of boiled dough, on another boiled rice; he had altered this, first amongst the infants, to soup and meat every day, sometimes with the addition of rice; there had been a good effect in health. He claimed that the Orphan Schools were used by the Government in 1854 as an infirmary for sick children taken from the Cascades Factory; this was the cause of the high mortality, not the food, as Hall argued.

I have had to receive idiots, deaf and dumb and blind children, children with diseased hip joints, with diseases of the spine, water in the head and any form of less marked disease than I have enumerated.

On the question of food, he was quite adamant,

I do not consider there is too much uniformity when they have baked meats or Irish stew two days in the week and broth four days. Uniformity of diet is more hurtful to adults.

On June 24 Hall was re-examined before the Commission to whom he presented an extremely long, minutely detailed report of the Orphan Schools, which he compiled after a visit there on June 20. This report,

written simply and hurriedly, just as he saw things and spoke with the staff, conveyed, more than all his other elaborately and carefully written articles, his sincerity, concern and great humanity:

Infant children playing in the yard without exception without hats or bonnets on - necks and arms better covered than at my former visit - had a better physical aspect, and more animated - clothing good.

....urine tubs are used in the boys' dormitories - with this practice I always felt the greatest disgust in the Convict Establishment

Girls in the school are taller in proportion to age than boys - some idiotic looking: a few fine intelligent heads and faces - 7 recently discharged from hospital after being dangerously ill from typhoid fever - two still very much emaciated who miss their wine and other extras - could eat more - would like more to eat - could eat more bread if they had butter to it

Girls' large dormitory corresponds with boys' - contains 56 iron beds, with broad iron lattice bottom - the bedding consists of a very thin hair mattress, 2 blankets, 1 rug, 2 sheets - very scant hair pillow - on lying down on several beds, I could feel painfully the sharp edges of the iron beneath

In addition to the large mass of documentary proof which he offered, Hall also demonstrated the inadequacy of the rations by exhibiting the single potato, the small mutton chop, the quarter pint of milk, the pound and a quarter of bread and the pinches of rice, tea and sugar, hitherto thought sufficient to nourish the children. At the conclusion of his evidence, he read a memorandum to the Commissioners, protesting against the composition of the Board which permitted two of its members to sit in judgment on their own acts, and to cross-examine him to the fullest extent, whilst he, a witness, was debarred from questioning them.

Actually the tide of the old, outworn ways was turning at last, precipitated by the obvious injustice and futility of the Board of Enquiry. Caught in the net of its own impotency, the Commission haggled and procrastinated until McDowell, one of the only two non-official members, resigned as a consequence of Bedford's continual offensive conduct at the meetings. On August 3 the Mercury, suddenly and dramatically, threw all its weight behind Hall, goaded into offensive action against the Government by the case of a boy of 13 or 14, Michael Folley, who had been an inmate of the Orphans Schools. The Mercury described how a "highly respectable citizen" of Hobartton applied for one of the lads as an apprentice. When Michael arrived, he was pallid, wan and weak, suffering from brutality and want.

Not only, however, was the poor boy miserably fed, and miserably clad, but even the few rags he had about him were in such a state as to render the belief that he had been an inmate of an Orphan Asylum almost incredible. He had been sick and the doctor had ordered him to wear flannel it was never changed from the time it was put on, and was alive with vermin.

The Mercury was "shocked and horrified", angry and indignant; it appeared that Michael's case was not an exceptional one; hunger, cruelty and want of cleanliness were the daily lot of the Orphan children.

It is bad enough that such treatment should have been tolerated so long. For the honour of our nature and for the honour of the colony, we trust that it will not be tolerated one moment longer.

Faced now with an outraged Public, the Board of Enquiry maintained a discreet silence. On August 12, Hall requested Wedge to move in Parliament for the production of all correspondence relating to the enquiry and for its report. Wedge was told that, although no report had yet been made, resolutions had been passed exonerating any person from the charge of causing excessive mortality at the Schools. Bedford, who was present in Parliament at the time, could contain himself no longer; in very strong language he accused Hall of libelling him, of publishing untrue statements not only in Tasmania but in a neighbouring colony also, and of forwarding damaging letters to the Government and to the Commission. Moreover, he confessed himself deeply hurt by the accusations being levelled against him in the press. However, his outburst received scant sympathy as public feeling had turned against him. Both in Parliament and in the press, Hall was not only exonerated from any improper motives, but credited with the most philanthropic intentions. The following day, the Governor, acting resolutely at last, issued peremptory orders that the children's food should be immediately increased: in future, all children above eight years of age were to have their allowance of meat and vegetables doubled, their allowance of milk quadrupled; children between six and eight their vegetables doubled, their meat increased in quantity fifty per cent, and their milk quadrupled; all children under six were to have their allowance of milk quadrupled. Other important improvements were to follow. An article, "The Queen's Orphan School", published in the Mercury on August 16, and repeated in the October number of the Australian Medical Journal for the medical fraternity throughout the world to see, declared that the Governor's action was the most severe censure possible that could ever have been passed on the previous management of the institution. Bedford was openly condemned:

How this horrible abuse could be allowed to exist for one hour after being shown up; how a member of the profession of medicine, should be found to uphold it; and how a medical officer, the witness, and supporter of such infamies, should be allowed to retain his situation - should not be instantly deprived of the trust he had betrayed - is really past all comprehension ... We cannot, we are deeply sorry to say, give credit to Dr Bedford's denials in Parliament of these charges of inhuman treatment nor can any amount of explanation account for a sextuple increase in an asylum of deaths over those in the circle of a crowded and not overhealthy city.

This vindication of Hall's contentions over the past five years symbolized the end of the old convict social era and the beginning of a new. Undoubtedly impelled by him alone, the new ideas in sanitary science, dietetics, and social reform were gradually gaining ground in Hobarton. Yet, pleased though he was, Hall knew that the need for guidance in the future, if conditions were to be on a par with those elsewhere, was just as great as the need for combat had been in the past. The path of progress was still strewn with obstacles difficult to surmount, as the report of the Board of Enquiry, which was forwarded on December 7, clearly showed. Although the report suggested certain improvements in buildings, accommodation and diet, it, nevertheless, emphasized that the previous management was in no way whatsoever responsible for the high mortality rate. Officially, therefore, Bedford was found not guilty of any negligence, and Hall incorrect in his assertions. In view of this, it was no surprise when Bedford's name was added to the list of members of the Board of Management appointed by the Government on December 20 to take over jurisdiction of the Orphan Schools on January 1, 1860, at which date all charitable institutions were handed over by the British Government to the care of the colony. Although Hall offered his services on November 14 in all good faith, and even though Benson, the newly-appointed Medical Superintendent, wished for his appointment, the offer was refused.

Why have his proffered services been treated with such studied contempt ?

asked the Mercury in disgust on December 22.

It may be that Dr Hall has been somewhat troublesome, that he has been zealous in the cause of these orphan children over much; that as a spier out of abuses, he has been a thorn in the flesh ministerial. We admit that all the odium which has been heaped upon those who have so scandalously and so cruelly mismanaged the Orphan School has been almost entirely owing to his untiring zeal and to his unflagging determination to uphold the cause of these neglected and ill-used children. There is no man in the community better qualified for a seat at the Board of Management than he is; and of this the Executive are as well persuaded as we are.

The Mercury accused the Government of acting in a narrow spirit, of religious intolerance and political favouritism. Its opinions were vehemently echoed by the whole Catholic community, who, in a body, rose to Hall's support. Impressed by the opposition the Government yielded and appointed two Catholics, H. Hunter and Sheehy, to the Board of Management. As the Mercury pointed out, Hall was not wise in his day and generation; he had not yet learned that "Honesty is a fool; and Trust, his sworn brother, a very simple gentleman."

S E C T I O N T H R E E

THE NEW COLONIAL SOCIETY

1860 - 1862

CHAPTER 16

MEDICAL SCIENCE

With the taking over of all charitable institutions by the colony on January 1, 1860, the old social system based on convictism crumbled into dust, and a new epoch was born. Assisted only by Miller, Hall had laboured diligently to mitigate the death throes of the old and the birth pangs of the new. Although the effort was costly in energy and time, and often detrimental to his own personal circumstances, yet he could, with pardonable pride, claim some measure of success. Indeed, by 1860, Hall had achieved a unique, dominating position in Hobart society: not only was he "Dr Hall" with whose fearless, determined outspokenness everyone, including the Governor, had to reckon, but he was also well known and approved in medical circles throughout Australia and in England. In spite of the diversity and complexity of his activities, his motivation was simple and therefore exceptional and puzzling to his contemporaries: in essence, he was a "physician", a healer of the sick, whose tool of trade was medical science, and whose sole concern was the health and welfare of the individual. From the tiniest, abandoned waif to the Governor, all persons of any class or creed were equally deserving of his compassion and devoted care in sickness or in need. But to cure the sick, or to prevent the healthy from becoming so, it was necessary, more often than not, to reform the social system. The physician, therefore, became the sanitarian and the social reformer, his tools of trade sanitary science and the instruments of authority and government. Consequently Hall's dual role of medical scientist and social reformer, which developed gradually in the middle and late fifties, characterized the last twenty years of his life, with his original dedication to medical science, buttressed by his strong religious faith, gradually predominating, as the intensity of the need for social reform slowly diminished. It also gave to his character a double-sided edge, difficult to comprehend and to cope with: he was, at times, as the occasion demanded it, both the fiery, emotional, aggressive fighter, and the cool, composed, controlled, learned man of science.

Thus, at the height of the Orphan School controversy, he wrote an interesting paper "On Snake Bites" which was read before the Medical Society of Victoria on February 21, 1859, and published in the April, 1859, number of the Australian Medical Journal. Hall's sheer delight in and enthusiasm for his subject were apparent in every word and made fascinating reading. Explaining his motive, he wrote,

Venemous snakes are very numerous in Tasmania, and I understand are even more so on the Australian continent. Cases of their bites do not, however, come so frequently under the care of medical practitioners, as to give any single individual very extensive experience in the treatment. I am in hopes, therefore, that the discussion of the subject by the members of the Society will elicit an aggregate amount of personal experience that will be of great scientific interest, and much practical value.

In fact, Hall's interest in snakes was a long-standing one:

A fine retriever dog I brought out with me from England, became a most inveterate snake-hunter, and enabled me to slay great numbers of them. In 1848, I made a collection for the Museum at Chatham. The reptiles were brought to me alive, that I might destroy them scientifically, and without injuring them as specimens. The men who caught them for me would pin them to the ground with forked and pointed sticks, and then tie them to the stick. I put them to death with a poison as potent as their own, the oil of tobacco. This I procured by moistening a sharp-pointed splinter of pine with saliva, and then rubbing it in the inside of the stem of a well-used tobacco pipe. The snake, touched with this anywhere within the mouth, would speedily become convulsed, and writhe in a species of tetanic spasms, and in a few moments expire. Snakes upwards of five feet long were so destroyed.

His paper comprised a detailed case history of George Herwood, an itinerant watchmaker, who died in the General Hospital at Hobarton four days after being bitten by a diamond snake, together with a summary of previous cases of snake bite which had come to his notice during twenty years' residence in country areas. After discussing forms of treatment used, - "Underwood's Antidote for snake bites, liquor ammoniae, Ipecacuan Poultrice and the like - Hall warned the Public not to rely on mere external antidotes or reputed specifics, but to apply a ligature above the wound, excise the injured flesh, cauterize by rubbing gunpowder over it and firing it, and seek medical assistance immediately. He concluded with seven important questions to which he suggested future experimenters might provide the answers. These, together with the case histories and some anecdotal material, revealed the state in 1859 of this branch of medical science. Aware of the many puzzling gaps existing in the

knowledge of the anatomical structure of the snake, and in the chemical composition of its venom, Hall wrote in encouragement:

Direct experiments, carefully made, to establish the truth, or otherwise of the foregoing points, would be an acceptable contribution to Australasian medical science.

Though my paper is far from being as comprehensive and satisfactory on this exciting branch of Australasian medical practice as I could wish, yet there is so much want of any reliable information on the subject on record that I have thought I may do good service to my medical brethren by thus conveying my own experience and ideas on it and perhaps incite others to come and do in like manner.

Incomplete though "On Snake Bites" may have been, it achieved the lasting distinction in the history of medical science in Australia of being the first published record of the "post mortem" appearances after a death from the bite of a snake.

In the new social period the techniques of the medical scientist - painstaking dissection, careful observation, detailed analysis, followed by the suggestion of new forms of treatment - became more apparent in Hall's response to Hobart society; the city was his patient, he, the physician. Indeed, in 1860 Hobart was still very sick, tottering uncertainly between the past and the future and manifesting many symptoms of the old disease of convictism. Keeping his finger carefully on its pulse, Hall was determined to cure its many ills and to guide and direct it towards a healthy future. In a letter to the Mercury on January 7, 1860, he requested the assistance of the press in this difficult task:

Now that our social state is undergoing such an important transition, it can only be led to the perfection it ought to arrive at, by the rigorous oversight of a jealous and watchful press, in which your labors hold so conspicuous and honorable a position.¹

Three months later, on March 1, he wrote again concerning the Orphan children:

I am impatient to see every trace of the crow's-foot of convictism eradicated from the establishment, and unoffending, helpless children no longer surrounded with associations which formerly made a child's transit from the Orphan school to the prison, one of so little change.²

Fortunately by 1860 the community for the most part offered little resistance, except that of ignorance and lack of understanding, to Hall's attempts to succour it, and accorded him the position, respect and honour he already received in other parts of Australia and overseas, and so

¹ Mercury, January 10, 1860.

² Mercury, March 3, 1860.

richly deserved in his own country. However, although the prospects for the future appeared favourable at the commencement of the new decade, Hall knew only too well that the period of convalescence could be long, that improvements in health were gradual and slow to be realized, and that careful vigilance was required to prevent a sudden relapse. The events of 1860 confirmed the correctness of his opinion.

On January 7 Hall established the fundamental requisite for a healthy society: that all Boards of Management of charitable institutions, including that of the General Hospital, the New Norfolk Lunatic Asylum, the Orphan Schools, and the like; the Municipal Council, the Board of Education, the Royal Society and other bodies should be freely open to the press.

Postponements of meetings for want of a quorum would not be likely to occur in the future, were the delinquents by whose indifference such delay became necessary, exposed through the public press. The apathy so characteristic of many of our voluntary associations for the public good would cease to be the rule, were the drones of the hive publicly pointed out - the working bees might then unite to drive out and replace such humming but honeyless shams.³

On the same day, at the first general quarterly meeting of the General Committee of the Benevolent Society, which was established on October 31, 1859, on the initiative of Archdeacon Davies to assist the increasing number of paupers, Hall put his belief into practice by successfully proposing that the press be admitted to the Executive and general meetings. That he was also no "honeyless sham" was proved by the long and faithful service over a period of twenty-one years which he gave to that society as an executive member and President. However, whilst he was cognizant of the power of the press for good, Hall was also aware that it could be dangerous to the public welfare at times, and was quick to contradict or condemn anything he considered harmful.

The incalculable mischief such an unwarranted assertion is capable of producing makes me feel it a duty both to humanity and my professional brethren, to give such an outrageous advertisement a direct contradiction,

he wrote in indignation to the Mercury on February 4, when an advertisement announced that sixteen females had died in childbirth in January. On the contrary, there had been only eight deaths registered during the thirteen months ending January 31, 1860, and in many cases these were actually due to other causes. Hall considered such a trifling mortality gave mothers

³ Mercury, January 10, 1860.

little cause to dread the dangers of childbirth.⁴

Although the Board of Management of the General Hospital and the Benevolent Society commendably opened their meetings to the press, Hall was disappointed to find as the year progressed that his suggestion was not so readily followed by other bodies, although he hoped that the Royal Society would do so after the departure of Milligan on March 31 to reside in England. He was especially concerned about the new Orphan Schools Board, which was regarded by many interested in the improvement of that institution with great distrust, as it included members who could not honestly and sincerely advocate improvements without condemning their own past negligence during the long period of convict mismanagement. This Board, however, forwarded to the Mercury on February 29 a list of twenty-three resolutions for improvements to the Schools. These Hall immediately and carefully dissected, analysed and criticized at some length; though valuable enough in themselves, he considered they still fell far short of what was required for the well-being of the children.

After spending from ten to twelve hours in overcrowded, ill-ventilated dormitories the children rise at the coldest hour of the twenty-four, and, be the weather what it may, proceed to a damp, chilling brick paved building in the yard to perform their ablutions. For this purpose, a dozen or so horse troughs filled with water are awaiting them. They go to wash in batches of about thirty at a time, and the water in the troughs continues unchanged until say 150 girls in one wash house, and 170 boys in the other have performed their morning's cleansings. The towels are about as numerous as the troughs and used in common. Surely it requires no special scientific knowledge to see that children habituated to such a defective system cannot have much sense of propriety or decency, or be fitly trained to become tidy, cleanly servants.

He suggested that each child should wash in fresh water in a galvanized iron basin and that in winter a stove with a good fire should be provided. He also sternly criticized the Board's failure to make its proceedings public. Although the children were looking healthier and happier, and the mortality rate had dropped from 10 to 2 in the last six months owing to the increased allowance of food ordered by the Governor, already the Board had ordered a decrease in the allowance of food, one fifth in the case of bread, two thirds in the portion of rice, and for the older children, one-fourth in their milk; Bedford also had contended for a decrease in the animal food, but this proposal was defeated. Such an undesirable relapse into the old ways would never have occurred if the

⁴ Mercury, February 4 & 6, 1860.

Board's meetings were open to public criticism. Hall disclosed that he had just received from Dr G. Balfour a table of the nutritive value of the food issued to the military orphans in Chelsea, computed on estimates given by such eminent authorities as Dr Christison of Edinburgh, Dr D. Thompson, the Professor of Chemistry at St. Thomas' Hospital, London, and Dr Letheby, the celebrated Health Officer of London. This table clearly proved that the old scale in use at the Queen's Orphan Schools, computed on the same data, was twenty per cent less in nutritive value. In an appeal to everyone to prevent a recurrence of the previous wholesale murder of friendless human beings, Hall reiterated his own dedicated service to their welfare.

I have not blinked this question or spared any pains necessary to elucidate the truth on behalf of our long-suffering orphans. Please God, 'my bosom's Lord', shall be at rest forever 'ere the orphans' cause shall lack an advocate.⁵

On March 17 the Orphan Schools' Commission Report, which was ordered to be printed by both Houses of Parliament in August 1859, finally appeared. Hall's "Review" of this report, which was published in the Mercury in two parts on March 21 and March 23, received considerable attention and acclaim in medical circles in Australia and in England; it also occupies a significant position in the history of sanitary science in Australia. Its author's remarkable objectivity, his breadth of vision as a world sanitarian, his unique position as diagnostician and prescriber for the city's ills, his complete dedication to his patient, were here delineated by his own words. No other man but Hall could have, or would have, written such a "Review"; in this fact lies its peculiar significance which induced the important English medical journal Lancet to call him "A Sanitarian in Tasmania".⁶

Hall's tone was calm, deliberate, a little melancholic at the frailty of human nature which "exculpated and eulogized" Bedford in spite of his negligence, whilst disparaging and misquoting himself and ungraciously ignoring his assistance in supplying the English documents necessary for important decision making. But he was very thankful that so much had been won from a commission composed as it was. Once again, he dwelt on his formula for a healthy city.

I have great dread of suppression in all matters of this kind and firm faith that by unreserved publicity the cause of truth, justice and humanity must ultimately triumph.

⁵ Mercury, March 3, 1860.

⁶ Lancet, 1860, Vol. 1, p. 626.

For the first time, he stated his attitude to scientific development and condemned those who ignored it:

....The apologetic tone in which 'recent investigations on the subject of dietetics' is referred to is remarkable. Surely it is the sacred duty of any Medical Practitioner having charge of the health and lives of large bodies of children to make himself acquainted with, and readily to adopt every improvement the researches of science may develop, and not to wait the promptings of professional brothers irresponsible for the management....

In his comments on the details Hall was concerned particularly with the three new diet scales according to age set by the Commission. Here there was a serious error, as the proportion of nitrogenous food to carbonaceous was one to four, rather than one to three, as was the case in the diet of the Chelsea orphans. For his own part, Hall was opposed to the scale system altogether, and advocated an unlimited daily supply of food according to the needs of the body,

a practice followed by all parents who do not presume to be wiser than nature or to over-rule her cravings by their own crotchety notions.

As he believed that the amount of bodily waste was greater in Tasmania where the "lamp of life" burnt more quickly in the pure atmosphere, he was also opposed to the fourteen hours' fast recommended by the Commissioners between supper and breakfast. He suggested that a slice of bread be given to the orphans before going to bed after a five o'clock tea. As regards the other provisions, Hall felt that much had been done, much left undone, though some of the omissions had already been rectified by the new Board of Management which, nevertheless, was the target of his final attack.

The wheel of improvement would henceforth advance satisfactorily, I feel assured, were two of the old clogs of convict obstructiveness removed from the present Board of Management and the press admitted to report "progress". A little leaven leaveneth the whole mass, and I shall ever dread that influence on the Board of Management, which I have made evident has been so injurious on the Commission of Enquiry.

His last words, however, were for the children; he hoped that soon fresh butter, eggs, fowls, fish, lemons, sodawater and spice would be part of their diet, as they were for children in the old country.

Although Hall's "Review" received a chilly reception in some quarters in Hobarton, it certainly did not in those circles best able to evaluate it correctly. In an article entitled "A Sanitarian in Tasmania" the Lancet expressed its gratification that far off members of London

medical colleges were maintaining their high position of disinterested guardians of the Public Health, and successfully carrying out these functions under circumstances of difficulty and obloquy.

It is due to Dr Hall that we should notice, with appreciation which they certainly merit, his searching analyses of the defects of the sanitary management of the institution in question, and his enlightened acquaintance with the latest reported conclusions published in this country. The reports of the Sanitary Commissioners, the tables and reports of our great military schools and public asylums, are all laid under contribution to illustrate the necessity for proper variation of diet, for frequency of meals, augmentation of food, and improvement in lavatories, drains and ventilation.⁷

The Australian Medical Journal also warmly supported Hall with two articles in its April, 1860, number. The first of these consisted of two letters, one of which was written by Hall on January 23, 1860, to Messrs West Ford and Fletcher, Honorary Medical Officers of the Orphan Asylum, Melbourne, from whom he requested information on the mortality rate of orphans under their care, the amount and mode of rationing, and other details of management. It was in this letter that Hall made that never-to-be forgotten statement which damned forever the management of the convict régime.

Now that the Asylum here is transferred from the Convict to the Colonial authorities, many changes have been made, and others projected. Thank God, some of the heartless brutes who thought flogging three times a day, and solitary confinement on bread and water, moral and medical treatment for the physical weakness of "wetting the bed" are no longer in power; and though all the elements of mischief are not eliminated from the new Board of Management, yet I believe and trust the preponderance of men with "hearts of flesh" is sufficiently great to prevent the horrible atrocities of the past ever having a chance of recurring for the future.

The second letter was written by F.T. West Ford, Senior Surgeon to the Protestant Orphan Asylum, Melbourne, in reply to Hall's request for information. It revealed a far happier, more humane, liberal situation in Melbourne where the death rate was four to five times less than in Hobarton.

In the second article "The Hobarton Orphan Asylum" the editors of the Australian Medical Journal took the opportunity afforded by the two letters to contrast the two institutions, each designed to serve the same end but in a different yet closely related country. In the

⁷ Ibid.

Tasmanian institution they found neglect, truculence, partizanship and their consequences; in the other, attention, benevolence and cordiality.

It needs no philosopher to forecast the different results to society when we who manage, or mismanage, these things have left the scene and a new generation has sprung up to fill our places.

After referring explicitly to Hall's description of the Orphans' ablutions - a remnant of the old convict régime - the editors appealed to the new Board of Management for a freer, more humane mode of treatment; those inelastic laws hitherto rigidly applied to whole groups of children should be softened and rendered more applicable to classes and even individual cases. "These", said the Editors, "were the demands of the time". Diet scales were a thing of the past; of deaths, diets and dormitories in public charitable institutions, the Australian Medical Journal had heard enough.

We trust that we shall never see Dr Swarbreck Hall's name again attached to any communication on the Orphan Asylum, except to one of unmixed praise, which we are certain he would pen with the sincerest pleasure.

To Bedford and his supporters, the Australian Medical Journal issued its final verdict:

Nor can we ourselves omit offering both to him, Hall, and to the new Board, our grateful recognition of services which in six months have reduced the mortality of these helpless creatures from eight to two per cent, compared with the corresponding simasters of former years.

Yet, important though it was, the Orphan Schools Affair was only symptomatic of the society in which it occurred: the same "neglect, truculence and partizanship" which formerly characterized the management of the Asylum were to be found firmly entrenched in other bodies and institutions in Hobart; moreover, the personal contest between Hall and Bedford merely exemplified in a high degree a conflict which existed between social groupings as well. The decaying remnants of the old convict régime lingered over-long for the welfare of the people, longer than in other parts of Australia, and could not be dislodged; men like Hall, Miller and Wedge were impatient to see them gone forever. In the years 1855-60, which saw the complete dismemberment of the convict system, the atmosphere of continual dissension, hostility, disparagement and denunciation, firmly moulded the Hobart community into two distinct social groupings, the progressive democrats and the conservatives. For this, Miller in the political field, Hall in the health and welfare area, were, no doubt, greatly responsible; but they had little choice if Tasmania, already far behind, were to keep pace with the rest of the world.

In early 1860, the tide of battle ebbed and flowed, with Hall spearheading one group, Bedford the other. Both the Royal Society and the Mechanics' Institute were subjected to its influence; in the Royal Society the conservatives were so deeply embedded that Hall was forced to retire in protest against its anti-liberalism;⁸ in the Mechanics' Institute, however, the lecture hall itself was the scene of battle. Established initially for the improvement of the working classes or mechanics, the Institute drew on the more affluent, better educated, official class for lecturers and managers to assist in its development; these, however, accustomed to wielding authority and power, were not content with their given role, as the Mercury pointed out in its Leader on March 1.

A conservative element has been somewhat offensively intruded into an institution which in its very essence is of a democratic character, and the interests of those for whose especial benefit the Institute was originally formed have been overlooked and neglected.

Faced with their own inevitable destruction, the working class members united with the more progressive, sympathetic elements in joint opposition to the conservatives. With an Annual General Meeting for the election of office-bearers impending, the Mercury warned on March 1 against any further violence on the floor of the Institute which was already in a state of disorder and confusion in a headlong flight to ruin.

It now remains to be seen whether those members, who have been foremost in bringing about this not altogether creditable state of affairs, have the temper and the ability to secure for the Institute the remedy of such evils as really do exist, without annihilating the Institute.

Hall, who was displaced as Vice-President by Milligan on February 27, 1858, and was now the spokesman for the democratic group, accepted the Mercury's challenge by taking on March 2 the only possible step open to those he represented, that of exposing to the Public the underhand methods by which the elections were engineered in favour of the conservative group. It was a desperate effort which clearly depicted and concentrated the deep bitterness and uncompromising hostility, both personal and collective, which had slowly grown between the two rival social groups.

Hostilities commenced the moment the meeting was declared open. Immediately Hall demanded that the list of those qualified to take part in the proceedings be laid before the Chairman, so that no person might

⁸ Courier, January 18, 1858.

be allowed to speak if he was not qualified to do so. When the resolution moving the adoption of the Annual Report was put, Hall struck again, declaring that a Mechanics' Institute was the last place in the world into which a "hollow form" should be introduced; consequently, he refused to acquiesce in a Vote of Thanks to a retiring Committee of which some members, especially Bedford, had neglected their duties; therefore, he asked that the list of attendances of Committee members at the Institute's meetings be laid on the table for inspection. He insisted that on two occasions neither the President nor a single Vice-President was present to take the Chair, with the result that the Vice-Presidents received a letter reminding them of their neglect of duty; unless these facts were known, it was impossible to fill in ballot papers honestly. Hall then asked for the production of nomination papers of which, one, Henty's, could not even be found. By this time, the meeting was a shambles, but worse was still to come. Hall flatly refused to go on with the ballot until it was certain Henty was properly nominated; further, he openly accused the Secretary, Burgess, of wrongfully manipulating the nomination papers of Henty and Bedford by having them signed in his own office by two Government clerks who were not eligible to do so. In short, the Institute had been treated with the greatest contempt, and the whole election was a hollow mockery. Amidst uproar and confusion, Hall argued that Bedford had not even paid his subscription for twelve months.

Would they let the mechanics and men with leather aprons in without payment? Bedford was no more entitled to admission without payment than they were, and this was nothing but flunkeyism to persons in high position.⁹

The Secretary retorted that Hall pandered to the mob - his flunkeyism was to the mechanics. When another member, Hamilton, paid Bedford's subscription, the ballot was held, with Hall alone dissenting. From the list of Agnew, Bedford, Dobson, Hall, Henty and Hone who nominated as Vice Presidents, Dobson, Henty, Agnew and Bedford were elected. Hall concluded the evening by entering a written protest against the election of Bedford and Henty.

In its Leader on March 5, the Mercury condemned the actions of both parties equally:

We know that this system of extolling those lecturers only who happen to occupy positions of influence has given very great offence to others whose labors on behalf of the

⁹ Mercury, March 5, 1860.

the Mechanics' Institute have been equally as successful. It is not just, nor is it wise to do so. These latter believe themselves to be slighted by the adoption of such a course. In the special commendation of one or two they see an implied censure upon all others Here we pay compliments to nothing less than a mitre or some highly paid officer of the Government.

But the paper was equally censorious of Hall's actions, accusing him of unjustifiably manifesting his own private feelings; if he were trying to serve the Mechanics' Institute he certainly took a somewhat round-a-bout way of doing it, and the results of the elections proved that the Public did not agree with his methods. With undoubted wisdom and insight into the social disease wreaking havoc in Hobart society, the Mercury sounded the death knell of the Mechanics' Institute.

But so long as the humble are overlooked and neglected merely to extol the superior claims of the affluent, and so long as bitter personal feelings are allowed to prevail amongst its members, so long will the Institute be crippled in its usefulness, and remain unpopular amongst those classes for whose benefit it was founded.

By the mid-winter of 1860, however, the irritations and frustrations of social disorder faded into comparative insignificance before the onslaught of a more formidable foe which paid no attention to class or creed. Once again, the community was welded together in opposition to a common enemy. In his note on the Meteorological Tables for July, read before the Royal Society on August 27, Hall wrote:

The meteorological records during this month are altogether anomalous; they are without parallel for the last twenty years. Never before was the atmospheric pressure so continuously high. The mean exceeds the mean for the month on the fourteen years' observations at Ross Bank Observatory by .379. In only 16 months, out of the 235 in the twenty preceding years has the mean pressure exceeded 30 inches, but the highest (July 1850) was below the present month's mean by -.080. The windforce total was never before so small; 10.14 lbs. pressure to the square foot. The lowest ever before recorded - also an exceptional instance - was 13.26 lbs. in the previous month. The number of calms, 57, exceeded by 8 the greatest number ever before noted. The temperature means of the whole month do not indicate anything very unusual, but the extreme "daily ranges" of the maximum and minimum thermometers - particularly between the 10th and 23rd days of the month inclusive (a period of fourteen days) show an average daily range of 22 degrees or $1\frac{1}{2}$ more than the month's mean and nearly $4\frac{3}{4}$ more than that of July, 1859. The terrestrial radiation thermometer, during the same fourteen days, shows how very cold the nights were, the mean being 3.73 degrees below the mean for the whole month. The solar intensity at the same time was also 2° higher than the month's mean. The month's rainfall was less than

one quarter of the average for the month of July and was considerably exceeded by spontaneous evaporation. The ozone mean was rather more than $\frac{3}{4}$ of a degree of the chromatic scale, less than the average of the three preceding Julys. The electrometer which indicated entire absence of electricity last month, for this, returns 26 negative records and 8 positive, the latter especially to be noted as occurring between the 9th and 19th days of the month.¹⁰

Hall also noted that in the Hobarton registration district of 25,000 people, the deaths from all causes during July amounted to 114, being 60 more than the average for July of the 5 previous years, and within 7 of all the deaths that occurred in the 3 previous months of April, May and June. Of these deaths, 80 took place within the 14 days especially alluded to. Under 10 years of age, the number of deaths exactly corresponded with the number during July, 1859, the healthiest July of the last 5 years. However, above 60 years of age, the oldest being 93, the unprecedented number of 49 deaths occurred, whilst in July 1859 there were only 8. Moreover, the weather during July closely resembled in many respects that which prevailed in London during the cholera years of 1832, 1849 and 1859, with the remarkable difference that Ozone was completely absent in London at the time, whilst being in abundance in Hobarton.

This unusually large number of deaths in the aged group in July was due to a severe epidemic of influenza which spread from Sydney south to Tasmania in June, 1860, reaching its peak in Hobarton about July 16. As the weather conditions were so exceptional exactly at the time of the epidemic, Hall naturally linked the two together in another noteworthy contribution to Australian medical science, namely an article "On Influenza Epidemic in Hobarton (Tasmania) in July, 1860", which appeared in the October, 1860, number of the Australian Medical Journal.

By 1860, Hall's interest in sanitary science and disease had led him to become a corresponding member of the Epidemiological Society of London, an influential and important scientific and medical body which was founded on July 30, 1850, under the presidency of Lord Ashley (the Earl of Shaftsbury) in response to a suggestion made by J.H. Tucker in the Lancet on September 15, 1849, that a society should be established especially to study diseases such as cholera and smallpox. Amongst its many activities the Epidemiological Society encouraged the writing of special reports of epidemics as they occurred in different localities, so that the general history of these visitations might be ascertained. In his article

¹⁰ Mercury, September 4, 1860.

"On Influenza Epidemic" Hall attempted to imitate this example in Australia.

The Australian Medical Journal is the only medium for these regions through which special reports of the character and effects of this widespread epidemic can be usefully made known and submitted to comparative examination, for the information of the medical practitioners of Australasia and the general advancement of sanitary science. I, therefore, initiate this desirable undertaking by contributing a medico-meteorological history of the disease and its fatality, as it appeared in the city of Hobarton and its environs, where I have practised my profession for many years.

As in his previous articles, Hall wasted no words, packing "On Influenza Epidemic" tightly with an impressive array of facts and figures, difficult to compress. He described his intention and his method carefully:

For several years past I have every month extracted from the Registrar-General's records the deaths that have occurred during the month, and tabulated and classed them in accordance with the age, cause of death, and classes of disease. At the same time I have minutely analysed the excellent meteorological table furnished by Mr Francis Abbott every month to the Royal Society and weighed the presumed influence of each meteorological phenomenon in its effects on the diseases and deaths of the month. As I believe such a course of investigation - laborious though it be - is well calculated to elicit useful truths, I have adopted the same plan for the basis of the present article.

Hall's analysis of the mortality disclosed that the total number of deaths, 114, in proportion to population was the highest ever recorded in Tasmania.

Of the 114 deaths

- 8 were under 1 year old
- 9 were between 1 and 5 years
- 4 were between 5 and 20
- 22 were between 20 and 45
- 22 were between 45 and 60
- 49 were 60 and above.

Such an enormous senile mortality was never before recorded in any one month. Hall found that the mortality formed three distinct, well defined divisions.

From July 1 - July 9 (incl.)	18 deaths
10 - 23 (incl.)	80 deaths
24 - 31 (incl.)	16 deaths

Therefore, he arrived at two conclusions: the first was most unusual and contrary to findings in Victoria, Sydney and London; namely, in Hobarton

influenza was more fatal to the aged than it was to the young; secondly, it was very severe during the fourteen days between July 10 and July 23. Hall believed these facts could be explained by the data of the meteorological phenomena at the time. The weather, particularly from July 10 to July 23, was characterized by continuously high atmospheric pressure, wide daily variations and extremes of temperature, high solar intensity, little rain, numerous fogs and high spontaneous evaporation, all of which were detrimental to health since they lowered the resistance of the body to disease. Fortunately, the amount of ozone recorded was very great, being from 5 to 9 on the Schönbein scale. Hall argued that the high death rate in the aged was due to the combination of the effects of influenza and the effects of the high atmospheric pressure which exerted a pressure on the body of about four hundred pounds in excess of the ordinary rate for July; this produced congestion of internal organs and ruptures of diseased blood vessels, resulting in death. However, in the younger age groups, better able to withstand the high atmospheric pressures, the great amount of ozone in the atmosphere mitigated the worst effects of the influenza. In short, Hall claimed for the climate of Tasmania advantages that had a powerful influence in decreasing the mortality from epidemic disease. Indeed, his opinions were confirmed by the Report of the Registrar-General of Victoria which stated that in Melbourne, where the amount of ozone was far less, the mortality was as heavy amongst children as amongst adults and old people. Thus, of the 319 deaths from influenza in Melbourne in July, as many as 153 were of children under 5 years of age, whilst in Hobarton, out of 114 only 17 were under 5 years, although the proportion of children to adults in Hobarton was much greater than in Victoria. Therefore, Hall reasoned that the theory which had been advanced by some European medical practitioners, that influenza was caused by an atmosphere largely abounding in ozone, was not borne out by his investigations. Nevertheless, he was prepared to admit that a large amount of ozone in the air with high, cold, dry winds, might irritate the mucous membranes of the air passages, nose, larynx, bronchial tubes and the like, and so produce one of the prominent symptoms of influenza, as well as of ordinary catarrh.

I cannot, on the other hand, help concluding that our large amount of ozone, as compared with English observations, or even with those in the cities of continental Australasia, was the means of mitigating the severity of the late epidemic and enabling the young and the healthy to escape from its attacks comparatively unscathed. If Dr Prout's idea - that

it is some gas widely disseminated in the air, and analagous to seleniuretted hydrogen, the product of volcanoes, which poisons the air and subjects all who breathe it to an attack of influenza - were true, it would be reasonable to conclude that the great abundance of ozone in Tasmania would neutralize it. Schönbein expressly states, as the result of direct experiment, that ozone destroys seleniuretted hydrogen gas. It is a legitimate inference, therefore, that the aerial poison, which was so virulent and destructive to all ages in Sydney, became so greatly weakened and neutralized when it reached Hobarton, by the more abundant prevalence of ozone in Tasmania, that only the aged, feeble and diseased succumbed to the epidemic.

In conclusion, Hall compared the meteorological phenomena in Hobarton in July with those in London at the time of the breaking out of the cholera epidemics of 1832, 1849 and 1854. He found in most respects they were similar - a dense, moist, stagnant air characterized them all alike. However, in one respect, they differed remarkably; in the London atmosphere no free ozone was detected, whilst in Hobarton it was in great abundance. This was the element which made the climate of Tasmania so salubrious.

CHAPTER 17

CONFRONTATION

However, Hall did not restrict his article to a discussion of the weather and its effect on influenza; on the contrary, his study of the vital statistics of July afforded him an excellent opportunity to assess publicly any changes which were already apparent in public institutions since they came under Colonial management on January 1, 1860. In so doing, he revealed that his own interests were no longer confined to the Orphan children, but were widened to include all persons who came under the care of public charitable institutions. The results of his enquiry were encouraging.

The public boards have improved the management of all the institutions transferred to the Colonial authorities from the Imperial; but their labours are by no means yet complete, and require more hearty and sincere support from the Executive Government than they have so far received.

In the Orphan School, out of an average daily strength of 468 children, not a single death took place in July. Hall wrote in the "Visitors' Book" at the end of August:

I am both surprised and delighted on visiting the Institution this day, to find that notwithstanding the general prevalence of the epidemic influenza throughout the whole community, since the commencement of the month, that the children never were in better health. There does not appear this day to be a single case of serious acute disease under treatment and no deaths have occurred since my last visit.

Actually, during 8 months of Colonial control, though the average number of children was greater than for the 6 previous years, only 1 death occurred. In the same period of time, on the average of the preceding 18 years, there would have been 11 deaths. The children were improved both in appearance and in behaviour; indeed, the officers agreed that discipline was maintained more easily now than it was "when the lash, starvation and the solitary cell were in constant use". Nevertheless, Hall warned that further improvements were urgently necessary, especially in sanitation. At other charitable institutions there was a similar impressive result: at the Male Invalid Asylum, for instance, the inmates

considered themselves so well cared for at the height of the epidemic that they publicly thanked their Medical Officer and Superintendent for the care bestowed on them and induced Hall to declare:

Such an acknowledgment for any public establishment of Tasmania is so novel that I am but too happy to make record of such a change in the treatment of any of our afflicted fellow creatures dependent upon public care, whether young or old, bond or free, sane or insane.

Undoubtedly, the crisis was over, and Hobarton's institutions were on the road to recovery and ultimate health; nevertheless, Hall had no illusions about the effort still required.

Of the 114 deaths in July, nine only occurred in the rural portion of this registration district, though its population is rather more than one-fourth of the whole. The city deaths would be about one in 176 of the population; the extra-urban, one in 688, or but little less than one-fourth of the urban rate. In England, while urban mortality averages twenty-five in the thousand per annum, in the rural districts it is only about nineteen per thousand, that is six per thousand - or twenty-five per cent - less. After making due allowance for all the disturbing influences in Hobarton, such an immense disparity between its mortality, and that of its rural neighbourhood, is indicative of the existence of local causes injurious to health and life, as powerful as those which have been so thoroughly demonstrated in the worst cities of the old country. Little sanitary knowledge is required to discover the "fount of evil" in a city where the water supply is altogether short of its requirements; drainage as defective as possible; cesspools everywhere, efficient ventilation nowhere; and quantities of decomposed food constantly sold and consumed. The meteorological conditions show how necessary it is that all these matters should speedily be reformed if the city of Hobart is to enjoy that exemption from disease, which its admirable locality and generally very salubrious climate demands as its inherent right.¹

In the "New Colonial Society" Hall continued to press for reform with the same vigour and determination with which he had struggled to inflict unpalatable truths on the Convict Régime. However, circumstances were much more in his favour: now fifty-six years of age, with a world wide reputation as a medical statistician and a sanitarian, he faced the new decade of the sixties, supremely confident in the correctness of his mission, convinced that the evils of Hobarton were due to local and remediable causes, and heartened by the improvements which were slowly gaining ground; the residents, too, for the most part, understood and appreciated his efforts; whatever their feelings,

¹ A.M.J., October 1860, pp. 252-269.

Hobarton was certainly the richer for his vital enthusiasm and the strength of his purpose.

In the last quarter of 1860 a number of reforms long advocated by Hall followed in rapid succession: a water rate of 3d. in the £ was set by the Municipal Council whose action he firmly but humorously upheld; to those who protested against such a financial infliction, he suggested the Corporation should also levy another rate for sewerage;² a month later, on October 10, the Council adopted "Plan Two" to enable all persons to receive an ample supply of pure spring water.³

....it will help to wash away the filth from our habitations and streets and enable the poorest of the people to slake their thirst with an unlimited amount of pure water, and to wash their persons, and garments, and bedding on equal terms with their more wealthy and favoured fellow citizens...

Hall wrote jubilantly.⁴ On October 3, the Board of Management of the Queen's Orphan Schools decided to admit the press to its meetings;⁵ also, at the end of the month, Hall wrote in the Mercury:

At the new Female Hospital (lately the Comptroller-General and Sheriff's offices) now fitting up for the reception of patients, I had on Saturday last the satisfaction of witnessing the successful application of the 'air fountain' principle of ventilation, recommended by me some years ago for adoption in the House of Assembly and in January last suggested to the Board of Management of the General Hospital.⁶

1860, indeed, came to an end on a triumphant note: on November 13 the policy of "unrestricted eating" by the children in the Queen's Orphan Schools was adopted;⁷ moreover, at the end of December, the Gazette announced that Hall's name had been added to the list of members of the Board of Management of that institution.⁸

Hall's new appointment was warmly approved by the Mercury which accredited it to the reputation he had acquired for his interest in the welfare of the children.

It is an appointment that will give satisfaction. Dr Hall has, for years past, shown a lively interest in the welfare

² Mercury, September 10 & 11, 1860.

³ Mercury, October 11, 1860.

⁴ Mercury, September 11, 1860.

⁵ Mercury, October 8, 1860.

⁶ Mercury, October 31, 1860.

⁷ Mercury, November 14, 1860.

⁸ Mercury, January 1, 1861.

of the poor, bereaved children in this benevolent institution, and by representations to the Board and communications to the press has done much to improve the conditions of the orphans. As a gentleman of very quick and benevolent sympathies, and as a member of the medical profession who has given the best proofs of his interest in the condition of these children, his accession to the Board of Management will commend itself to every one's sense of propriety.⁹

Fellow members were Henty (the Colonial-Secretary and Chairman), W.E. Nairn, E.S.P. Bedford, W.L. Crowther, H. Hopkins, H. Hunter, W. Rout, Sheehy, R. Shoobridge and J.J. Stutzer: all were men of exceptional ability and experience, with a great potential for good, provided they could work together harmoniously towards a common end - the welfare of the 490 children under their charge. Of these, 178 were in the male school, 157 in the female, and 155 in the infant school, all under the superintendence of Dr Benson; 241 were Protestants, 246 Roman Catholics and 3 of unknown religion.

After years of arduous effort to improve the orphans' lot, Hall accepted the honorary office of Member of the Board with alacrity, hoping to secure at last the higher standard of child care which he knew existed elsewhere and needed in Hobarton. He sincerely believed that the authority he exercised was that of the natural guardian of the children, that is, parental; acting conscientiously on this conviction, he visited the institution frequently for hours at a time to see how the directions of the Board were put into effect.¹⁰

During the first six months of 1861, he was very active, suggesting many small improvements to soften and humanise the children's environment: at the very first meeting of the Board on January 3 he proposed that crockery replace tin plates at meals, that better knives and forks, salt cellars and the like be used;¹¹ later, he suggested macaroni on Friday instead of the usual rice,¹² that iron bedsteads be substituted for the boys' hammocks,¹³ and better drainage be installed in the infant school;¹⁴ above all, he was concerned about the children's mental health

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Mercury, August 9, 1861.

¹¹ Mercury, January 4, 1861.

¹² Mercury, February 6, 1861.

¹³ Mercury, April 3, 1861.

¹⁴ Mercury, May 1, 1861.

and the system of punishment used. He reminded the Board that in the time of Captain Booth corporal punishment was discarded and the children controlled by kindness and affection; no punishment was inflicted without the Superintendent's consent and was recorded; now, for some trifling chattering or misconduct they were striped with the cane and often punished contrary to the Superintendent's directions.¹⁵ As his frequent observations convinced him that much was to be desired, he expressed his dissatisfaction both in the official Visitors' Book and at the Board meetings. Moreover, anxious not to monopolize the guardianship of the institution, he proposed the establishment of a Visiting Committee of members to exercise weekly, or oftener, supervision, and also a Ladies' Committee to overlook the food, clothing, health, moral instruction and education of the children. Both these two resolutions were negatived.

Though my exertions to obtain efficient supervision of our establishment were defeated, I did not feel that I was thereby exonerated from my individual responsibility, and have, therefore, continued to exercise a vigilant oversight of the institution, by which I have frequently been enabled to give useful information at our Board meetings, and to get beneficial resolutions enacted.

Hall explained on August 7.

From the first, he endeavoured to work harmoniously with Benson, often giving him verbal suggestions for improvements, but he was not met in a like spirit; then he tried written communications which were completely ignored.

As I had no idea of the children's welfare being made dependent upon the caprices or obstinacy of the Superintendent, I was then necessitated to constantly press such matters on the notice of the Board.

As Benson objected early in the year that there were no "Rules and Regulations" in force for the management of the institution and this was technically correct, Hall assiduously, with great perseverance in spite of obstruction, remedied this defect by drawing up a new set of regulations which were put into immediate effect by the Board, only to find them evaded under any fleeting pretext. It seemed that Benson was free to ignore the Board's resolutions, and to appeal to the Executive Government whenever he wished.¹⁶

Of course, such an impasse could not continue. All during the year the latent hostility between the various members of the Board

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Mercury, August 9, 1861.

smouldered like a festering sore, ready to erupt at the slightest provocation. Certainly, considering past events, the appointment of both Bedford and Hall to the Board of Management was an act of optimism by the Executive, rather than of wisdom and foresight; Hall's determination, possibly too forthright and insistent at times, and Bedford's injured pride were too incompatible for harmonious cooperation, even for the sake of the orphan children. Slowly, with mounting tension, the Board split into two groups - Hall, Crowther and Hunter, the progressive popular element, versus Bedford, Nairn and Henty, the conservative officials, with the less vocal allegiance of the other members varying uncertainly between the two.

At a special meeting called on May 21 to discuss the regulations pertaining to the Medical Officer's duties, Hall's outspoken and forceful adherence as a medico-vital-statistician to the truth regardless of personalities, lit the fuse that exploded the Hall-Bedford feud once again into stormy activity. In his speech supporting the rule that a record should be kept of all cases treated, Hall referred to the previous neglect of keeping such a record, and the inconvenience caused some years ago when many deaths occurred; had such a record been kept, it would have been apparent that in some cases inquests ought to have been held, and blame would then have been attached in certain instances. Although Bedford was not present at the time, Benson's hostility towards Hall was undisguised: in the discussion of a rule which proposed that in severe cases and during the prevalence of epidemic disease consulting assistance should be obtained from the medical members of the Board, taking them in succession and commencing with the senior, Benson maintained there were three medical men on the Board and to be forced to call in any particular one in whom he, perhaps, had no confidence placed him in an invidious position. It was therefore decided to call in all three together.¹⁷

At a later special meeting on July 11 to appoint extra medical assistance to the Schools during a severe epidemic of measles, Bedford retaliated fiercely. As Hall had applied for the position as a private doctor, he was discreetly absent from the meeting, the only one he did not attend. The new appointee's duties were to take charge of a portion of the sick under Benson's direction and to assist in bringing up the medical register of hospital cases. There were four applicants:

W.S. Keen	10/- per day
H.H. Harvey	no amount given

¹⁷ Mercury, May 23, 1861.

J. Doughty	£1.1.0.
E.S. Hall	£2.2.0.

The prospect of Hall in this position horrified Benson and Bedford who decided to prevent it at any cost. As he had done once before at the Royal Society, Bedford took the floor immediately the meeting was declared open in an attack which was aimed at negating the sympathies of members towards Hall. Although the Chairman and Crowther tried to soften and dismiss the matter, Bedford would not be quietened and accused Hall of uttering abominable slanders against him in his absence and of attacking the Superintendent, Headmaster and others too. Both Hunter and Crowther defended Hall in his absence; Hunter maintained that his disinterested zeal for the well-being of the children gave him the right to be considered; Crowther asserted that there would be no conflict if Benson would not set his face against every suggestion that Hall might make.

There was a common end to serve and he (Crowther) believed that Dr Hall was repeatedly misunderstood; moreover, he was deaf.

However, speaking strongly against Hall's conduct towards Benson and himself, Bedford swayed the vote, four to three, against Hall, who thus lost the opportunity to care personally for the sick children.¹⁸

Not unnaturally, the whole of Hobarton anticipated a stormy meeting of the Board of Management of the Queen's Orphan Schools on July 23.

All the preparations for a 'row' were duly made, wrote the Mercury in its leader on July 25,

A forewarning was given that the meeting would be of a very exciting character, and the performance quite equalled the expectations thus raised.

Before the business of the meeting commenced, Hunter, a Catholic, repudiated a report circulating in the city that he was influenced by Hall's leadership, insisting that the Catholics acted fairly and conscientiously as individuals. Coming quickly to his support, Hall challenged Bedford, claiming that everything had been done to prevent him protecting the children; moreover, he accused Bedford of denouncing the members of the Board in the Legislative Council. Hall moved a resolution that Bedford be required to justify the "outrageous epithets" applied to him and to show cause why he had passed over the five meetings intervening between May 21 and July 11, and reserved his attack for the only occasion

¹⁸ Mercury, July 12, 1861.

on which Hall was absent; otherwise he demanded an apology. As Hall and Bedford argued, Nairn rose to a point of order and objected to any inference by Hall to Bedford's motive or conduct "as he could not tell where the matter would end". Hall immediately produced a newspaper report of the meeting of May 21, which showed that Bedford's name was not mentioned. "if he chose to take these remarks to himself, he (Hall) could not help it". Hall then proceeded to show the necessity for keeping a proper record of all medical cases, which, he insisted, would not cast any imputation on the skill or attention of the Medical Officer nor any reflection of improper treatment. He, himself, had been acting on the most conscientious motives. As the argument moved back and forth, Chairman Henty accused Bedford of bringing the trouble upon himself; Nairn blamed Hall, whilst Crowther objected that if Bedford had complaints he should go to the press. With that, the meeting returned to some order; but a second attack on Hall was to come.

Towards the end of the meeting, a letter was read from Benson, who sought the opinion of the Board as to whether any member had a right to interfere with the economy of the establishment without the permission of the Board. The Board agreed that no such right existed. Benson then asked if any medical man had the right to visit the sick children in the absence of the authorized medical attendant. Speaking feelingly, he said he had been twenty-six years connected with the public institutions of the colony and had never experienced such unprofessional treatment as he received from a member of this Board, Dr Hall, who went round to the children, felt their pulses, looked at their tongues, put his ear to their chests and made many remarks about their complaints. Benson vowed that if he persisted in these actions, he could treat the cases himself.

Whilst Crowther could see no harm in Hall's conduct and thought too much had been made of the matter, as any medical member of the Board had the right to visit the sick in hospital, Bedford agreed with Benson and denounced Hall's conduct as highly unprofessional. Hall, in turn, defended his own behaviour and denied having interfered unnecessarily with Benson. When he described two cases of neglect he had seen, he was asked to put his statements in writing; these, written quickly and briefly, appeared unconvincing. As Crowther maintained the right to visit the sick and Bedford dissented, a resolution was put to the meeting and passed that no medical or other person could visit and examine sick children without the consent of the Medical Officer. The meeting closed on

another note of accusation, Hall charging Benson with neglect of duty on Sunday week and Benson calling on the Board to protect him from Hall's unjust attacks which were condemned by a majority of the Board.¹⁹

In its "Leader" on July 26, the Mercury loudly denounced the meeting as disgraceful.

The gentlemen charged with the task of managing the Queen's Orphan Schools are surely trying their best to bring the system of government by boards into contempt ... Both the institution and the public have to deplore the presence of many unruly elements, and the exciting and stormy discussions to which they contribute are rapidly becoming one of the scandals of the day.

In the paper's judgment, it was ridiculous that a dozen men of commonsense could not sit round a table to dispose of matters such as dietary, hospital discipline and the like without snapping each other's noses off.

There are some people, however, who will pick a quarrel out of anything and who are endowed with such a gift for quarrelling that, if they cannot find, they will invent some cause of strife.

Although the Mercury conceded that Hall was very honest and earnest minded in his endeavours to improve the conditions of the orphans, it accused him of fostering antagonism and bitterness of feeling, due to his own combativeness of disposition, and declared him

too pugnacious to be eminently useful and more instrumental in sowing the seeds of discord than in promoting a spirit of cordial cooperation in the management of our public institutions.

Crowther, too, came in for a share of the censure and was accused of thrusting himself with professional alacrity into the very petty quarrel between Bedford and Hall.

How on earth is it that the professors of the healing art are so everlastingly at war with each other ?

asked the Mercury in disgust, as it charged Hall, Bedford and Crowther with using the Board as an arena for professional jealousy and strife. It suggested that it was time for the Government to reconstruct the Board, or substitute an entirely different system of administration.

Neither Crowther nor Hall allowed such strong criticism of his actions to go unchallenged. Hall was used to being misunderstood by this time, but Crowther was certainly not, and considered the Mercury's interpretation of the whole affair untrue and unjust. Indeed, he saw

¹⁹ Mercury, July 25, 1861.

the complex situation of the relationships between the various members of the Board in a much broader context than a mere petty feud arising from professional jealousy between Bedford and Hall. The quarrelling, in fact, was a part of the teething problems of the New Colonial Society in which the old established forms and agents of the Government were reluctant to give way to new and more progressive elements. Rising quickly to his own and Hall's defence, he attempted to define the position on these terms and to bring some rationality to the dispute. In a letter to the Mercury on July 27, Crowther pointed out that the Board was in heathen darkness as to what its powers were, or were likely to be. In spite of this, the affairs of the institution were conducted with great care and economy; considering that a member of the Board was one of those who had publicly expressed in Parliament their opposition to the management of public charities by Boards, it was a surprise that so much was achieved with so little interruption.

I deprecate personal squabbling but I as equally deprecate a spirit which construes every suggestion made for the benefit of the children into dictation and every remark not in harmony with its own view of things into a 'casus belli'.

Crowther stressed that the Boards of Management were no sooner created than they were accused of extravagance, irresponsibility and mismanagement. The Hospital Board had done well because it was composed of plain business men, a selection from the official element having been carefully avoided; also, it did not contain a single individual known to be hostile to the new order of things. In fact, Boards were created against the inclination and wishes of the majority of the Executive, and due care had been taken to give them no definite organization. Thus, it was hardly fair to accuse them of the want of that responsibility which had never been defined. Crowther accused the Mercury of censuring the Board overmuch and of not placing the matter in the right light before the Public. Claiming that his own part in the meeting of July 23 had been completely misconstrued, he firmly stated his own position and his insistence on the right as a member of the Board to visit the sick in hospital

....let me say with all deference to the majority who carried the resolution barring this right, and substituting the consent of Dr Benson in its stead, that a more effective course could not have been adopted to prevent improvement in every department of the establishment and which must tend to consummate a retrograde condition of things.²⁰

²⁰ Mercury, July 30, 1861.

Crowther's letter, which Hall described as clear and manly, immediately lifted the sordid affair from the petty level of personal antagonisms to that of attitudes, policies and organization, and put it on a more rational basis in which personalities played no part.

Hall also replied to his critics in a lengthy, but simply written letter to the Mercury on August 7. These two letters, written in reply to the same article, provided an interesting and revealing insight into the attitudes and characters of the two doctors who were engaged in the same task of caring for the orphan children. Whereas Crowther saw the problem with the eyes of the progressive administrator who was later to become the Premier of Tasmania, Hall regarded it, as always, as a gentle, humane physician who was primarily interested in the health and happiness of each individual child, and, though fully cognizant of political realities, looked upon efficient administration merely as a means to this particular end. Hall's strong sense of responsibility, his great love and sympathy for children, the depth and penetration of his understanding of their problems, his untiring and selfless dedication to their welfare were no better revealed than in this letter which is worthy of reading, not only to appreciate Hall's character and work, but also as an example of the high idealism of the best nineteenth century social reformers and philanthropists.

After a brief defence of his actions as a member of the Board, Hall emphasized how necessary it was that he should continue to assist the children; as a sanitary reformer and vital statistician, he knew that the Queen's Orphan Schools were not yet in order. During the present measles epidemic of 1861, 90 children out of 250 at the Randwick Asylum in Sydney were affected by the disease and yet not one died; in the Orphan School in Hobarton, where the epidemic began at the beginning of June, out of 475 children, 8, all above 5 years of age, had died by July 31 and there would probably be more. This number was equivalent to the number of deaths in the whole registration district of Hobarton where there were 14 times more children of the same ages. Hall disclosed that all his attempts to assist Benson forestall the ravages of the disease, even to the offer of voluntary medical assistance, were ignored by him.

The sanitary statistician elsewhere will draw the conclusion at once from these premises that there must be something radically wrong in the Queen's Orphan Schools to cause such enormously discrepant results. We may squabble forever over minute details, and one medical man's statements and opinions be esteemed to outweigh another's, but the inevitable deduction by the sanitary reformer will be, your house is not yet in order.

However, Hall conceded that even this large figure of 8 was an improvement on the 27 who had died in 1854, a number equivalent to the number of deaths at all ages in the rest of the district. To the Mercury who accused him of "combateness of disposition" Hall replied:

It has been aptly said that it requires an opponent to get up a quarrel; therefore, if my unselfish exertions to improve the condition of those long neglected children had not been systematically opposed, I should have had no grounds for my persevering 'combateness', reform would have peacefully progressed. Better, however a thousand fold 'the exciting and stormy discussions', so scandalous to tender consciences, than the death pall of secrecy that so long screened the dead bones and rottenness, the tyranny and corruption of convict misgovernment.

With reference to Bedford he had little to say,

Public Boards properly constituted and open to the press will ever be the best rulers of public charities, if the gentlemen who undertake the office one and all have faith in the system and honestly and earnestly discharge their individual obligations. Not so, if some of them only occasionally and briefly attend Board meetings etc. for partisan purposes, or to reopen discussions already settled by the regular workers.

Courageous and determined to bring the Queen's Orphan Schools on a par with the best conducted institutions of a similar kind elsewhere although he was saddled with ugly names, Hall sought affirmation in the guiding principle of his life "Whatever betide, for the right".²¹

In August, 1861, the peculiar problems associated with the management of the Schools showed few signs of a peaceful solution. Certainly, owing to Crowther's clear-sighted analysis, the problem was better and more healthily defined: was a Board the ideal form of management for such an institution; and, if so, what were its powers and responsibilities? However, neither party to the dispute was prepared to compromise. Indeed, "An Act for the Better Management of the Queen's Asylum", presented to Parliament by the Colonial Secretary on August 30, carefully avoided the question of powers and responsibilities; in fact, Henty thought the Board would continue its action on its present footing, although the Government had from time to time the power to change its management; in his opinion no difficulty had hitherto been experienced in carrying out its purpose.

This assertion was strongly repudiated by Crowther who maintained that, if the Board was to work well, its powers and responsibilities must

²¹ Mercury, August 9, 1861.

be defined by Parliament, and the control of the institution vested in it; not in name, but in reality; contrary to the Colonial Secretary's statement, the greatest difficulties were being encountered by the Board in getting its resolutions carried out, and indeed the Bill should be delayed until members of the Board could offer suggestions as to its merits.²² The Mercury agreed that the Board was in a complete state of uncertainty, with many of its resolutions over-ruled. Hall also affirmed that if the 'Rules and Regulations' drawn up by him and passed by the Board were efficiently exercised by the Superintendent, there would be no need for much of the Bill at all.²³ Obviously the new act bypassed the Board.

At a meeting on September 2 Hall and Crowther expressed their dissatisfaction strongly in their separate ways. Whilst men argued about power and authority, children were dying. Hall, the medico-statistician, once again raised the question of mortality in the Schools where, out of 475 children, there were 12 deaths in the last 8 months, or rather, in the last 3 months. As this was very serious indeed, he moved a resolution that the Medical Officer be required to lay a special detailed report on the measles epidemic before the next meeting of the Board. Crowther, the administrator, was equally indignant; faced with a new draft of rules setting forth the functions and powers of the Board, which he considered quite unsatisfactory, he launched into a vehement attack on the manner in which the Executive had treated the Board by overruling its appointments and decisions; he declared that the Board was attacked on all sides, powerless, consulted when convenient, and ignored at other times; even its membership was incongruous, composed as it was of some people opposed to its existence. He presented three resolutions to correct some of this injustice. Bedford, who was present at the time, defended himself as of some use in limiting the expenditure and watching the economy, a fact which Hall denied.²⁴ In the Legislative Council, the next day, Whyte took up the cudgels for Crowther and laid bare the naked truth that the Board was a farce, a sham.

The Board, it would appear, might pass resolutions and offer suggestions, but had no power to compel their being carried out. In fact, the Government retained all the power in its own hands and it was useless for the Board to protest.

²² Mercury, August 31, 1861.

²³ Mercury, September 3, 1861.

²⁴ Mercury, September 8, 1861.

The Colonial Secretary in reply indicated that the Board was just an experiment at present and it was unwise to give absolute control to Boards.²⁵ Not to be outdone Crowther moved at the next meeting of the Board on September 16 that an address be presented to the Governor, protesting against any interference by the Executive either in a pecuniary way or otherwise, and asking that the functions of the Board should be accurately defined.²⁶

In such an anomalous situation, the hostility between the "official" members, who supported the actions of the Executive, and the "popular element" continued. In an attempt to clarify the situation, Parliament on September 5 had appointed a Select Committee

to enquire and report upon the condition of the several charitable institutions of the colony recently placed under the supervision of Boards of Management, and upon the nature and extent of the powers possessed by such Boards, and the practical results that had followed from this system of management.²⁷

However, the Select Committee issued no report owing to its suspension after hearing a number of witnesses. In the meantime, Parliamentarians themselves revealed their confusion: on October 28, in the Committee of Supply, one accused the Board of extravagant expenditure, another said the Executive had little control over an institution managed by a Board and could only advise economy, a third hoped the Select Committee would enquire into how the Board had been thwarted by the Executive, whilst a fourth considered the estimates submitted for 1862 by the Board were unsatisfactory, and should be returned for reconsideration.²⁸ Somewhat indignantly, the Board denied that the estimates had ever been seen by them;

The Board further desires to take this opportunity of protesting most strongly against the anomalous position it is placed in - being charged with 'wasteful expenditure' etc. when it has never ever been consulted in the matter. And it will be found that many of the items have been positively disavowed by the Board in the two reports, lately adopted and which are now in the hands of the Government.²⁹

It was little wonder, therefore, that tempers sometimes became irritated at Board meetings. Understandably enough, Hall's earnest advocacy of the

²⁵ Mercury, September 4, 1861.

²⁶ Mercury, September 18, 1861.

²⁷ H.A.P., 1861, p. 90.

²⁸ Mercury, October 29, 1861.

²⁹ Mercury, October 31, 1861.

cause of justice, truth and humanity on behalf of the Orphan School children was construed by his opponents as offensiveness and personal abuse. On October 8 in his concern for the welfare of the children he described Benson's medical report of the measles epidemic as meagre, insufficient and highly unsatisfactory, but his resolution that Benson be required to furnish a second, fully detailed report was defeated.³⁰ At the next meeting on November 4, at the height of a discussion on the "Report for 1860" already adopted on October 8, he objected to the annoying habit of the "official members" of reopening and arguing about matters already settled by the others during their frequent absences.

When a member urged that Bedford ought to publish in the newspapers any observations he had now to make on the merit or otherwise of the report and not to reopen an endless discussion on the subject; and, as I remarked, not even citing correctly the very printed document lying open before him, Dr Benson launched forth aggravating allusions to my letters through the press. This the chairman let pass unrebuked, but when I retorted that Bedford 'dare not meet my statements fairly and openly' I alone was subjected to the censure of the chairman. I protested against such partiality in the chairman, and Dr Crowther manfully followed up my protest.

Hall summed up the cause of his long conflict with Bedford:

On all occasions I have sought to obtain open and above board discussions as to the actual management of the institution and the results and I never will allow erroneous statements to pass unchallenged by whomsoever made, or however arrogantly and dogmatically asserted.³¹

It was enough; the Government took note, seeing little hope of peaceful cooperation between men so opposed in character and attitude. On December 31, the three doctors, Bedford, Hall and Crowther, were notified by circular letter that the Government had decided to reduce the number of members and that their services were dispensed with for the following year.³²

³⁰ Mercury, October 9, 1861.

³¹ Mercury, November 8, 1861.

³² CSD 4/6/36.

CHAPTER 18

SOCIAL IDEOLOGY

The Government's decision, though not unexpected and perhaps necessary in the interests of peace and unity, sharply focused the complex question of public and governmental as opposed to private and individual responsibility for those people less able or fitted to care for themselves: a question of social welfare versus charity which remains a subject for debate even to the present day. Consequently, Hall's efforts to secure medical and social reforms in the past and his work in 1862 and subsequent years assume a new and vital significance as the initial stages of a long, protracted struggle in Tasmania, as elsewhere in Australia, to secure a better, fuller life for every citizen, irrespective of natural or environmental endowment.

Uncertain in motivation and direction though these early efforts were, by January 1862 the urgency of the pressures and difficulties - political, economic and social - confronting the colony, which was no longer supported by Britain's convict system, forced fundamental issues to the surface so that they were recognized, formulated and discussed. Hall, Bedford, Crowther and Hunter were amongst those who debated these important ideas; attitudes and actions which were previously lacking an analysis of their underlying motives were now subjected to examination, and the results woven into the fabric of social theory, either as a personal justification or a direction and stimulus to others.

In its discussion, hesitant and exploratory in tone, of the doctors' exclusion from the Board and the Government's failure to replace them by three other independent members, the Mercury demanded that an immediate solution be found to the disturbing and confusing problem of the charitable institutions.

If these institutions are to be under the control of the Executive, let it be in such a sense as will leave to the Executive its full measure of responsibility to Parliament. If they are to be subject to popular management, let the official element disappear.¹

¹ Mercury, January 3, 1862.

On January 11, 1862, Bedford replied to his critics and expressed his beliefs publicly for the first time.

This time a principle of great importance is involved. It is right people should see upon what unjust principles a large portion of the public revenue is expended in what are miscalled charitable institutions.

Faithfully and fearlessly he declared his opposition to the management of institutions supported by the public revenue by unpaid Boards which were less economical than a paid officer; moreover, the principle was one of compromise, divided authority and shirked responsibility. He objected that the Boards in their methods of administration followed the procedures established elsewhere by Boards which were dependent upon charity, endowments and subscriptions, but at the same time were not limited by their financial restrictions; in fact, they had all they wanted. The trouble was that Boards in Tasmania were acting as Boards of Charity, and not as Boards of Poor Law Guardians which in fact they really were. There was a large poor law of orphans, destitute, sick and insane; since taxes were paid by all classes, it was an injustice, especially to the working classes, if inmates of institutions were in better conditions than honest labour could place the working man in his old age or sickness, or provide for his children's maintenance and education.

To be consistent the Government should extend its paternal care to a wider range. Why are the 1400 patients and 400 children, the invalids and lunatics in the asylum alone to be provided for out of taxes; is it just to grant this enforced benevolence of unlimited supply to a portion who are not the tax paying portion either, and the sorrow, sickness and wants of the suffering among the rest of the people to be provided for by their own means which can never give them the luxuries these Boards dispense, and yet from the pockets of the excluded is taken the money that supports these miscalled charities ?

If the suffering and destitute were to be surrounded with luxuries, it should be the "pure field for charity"; the state had done its duty when the necessity was provided for, nothing more. In short, he objected to the right which Governments and Boards had taken upon themselves to spend the public taxes in providing far more than should be given out of public monies.²

Superficially, Bedford's reasoning appeared logical enough. However, in spite of years of controversy with Hall, he still missed the one factor which had always been a source of contention between them - the need to introduce the new developments in sanitary science, diet and health

² Mercury, January 11, 1862.

care, and to allow for their cost. Hall summed up the situation simply when he replied to Bedford's opinions on January 15.

Why will not Dr Bedford try to keep pace with the age, and cease his vain efforts to stem the advance of sanitary improvements. It is never too late to mend, and no one would rejoice more heartily than myself to enlist my professional junior in the good cause in the honourable corps of sanitary reformers and work with him harmoniously as brothers, members of the same college, for the common good of every class of our fellow men.

Of course, Hall slashed Bedford's statement to shreds, detail by detail. Never was it more apparent how different the two men were in outlook and professional development; for instance, Bedford appeared to regard the orphan children as nuisance objects to be supported by the Government at a minimum cost; Hall called them "the innocent little ones" orphanized by the death, destitution or depravity of their parents. Indeed, he considered Bedford's views were in direct opposition to the teachings of Holy Writ.

Do as you would be done unto is a golden rule applicable to all times, persons, places and charitable institutions and makes no limitations to the amount of relief to be afforded, according to the sources from which the funds are raised.

Although in his view Boards of Management were completely satisfactory if properly composed, purposefully motivated, and efficiently and loyally served, as in the case of the Benevolent Society and the Servants' Home, Hall, unlike Bedford, was not really concerned with the type of organization under which charitable institutions functioned. Like Florence Nightingale, the Misses Twining and Carpenter, and Dr G. Balfour, whose ideas and work in England he enthusiastically followed, his emphasis was individualistic, liberal and humanitarian, his role always that of the physician. Kindly, compassionate, sensitive to the suffering of others, and in the vanguard of modern social theory, he despised Bedford's calculated parsimony and outdated ideas restricted to the concept of Poor Law Guardianism. With ardour and scorn he banished Bedford's accusations of Board extravagance in 1861 to the realms of inhumanity.

Butter comes next in Dr Bedford's category of the Board's sins of extravagance though he forgot to inform the public that it is limited, I am sorry to say, to the children in the infant school, constituting only one-third of the strength of the establishment. All the other boys and girls have their pint of sweetened milk and water - one-third milk, two-thirds water - with a homeopathic flavouring of tea therein night and morning, with dry bread the year through. So much for their 'large allowance of milk' and 'luxuries' at two out of their three

daily repasts. Baked meat and potatoes, Irish stew and soup, being their dinner alternately six days of the week, and oatmeal stir about with sugar and three quarters of a pint of milk on the seventh (Friday). On Friday a morsel of cheese is served to each child at tea time, to make the nitrogeneous aliment equal to the fresh meat days. On Sunday a pudding of suet, flour and currants is added, but the flour comes out of the bread allowance. Surely no reasonable parent can call this 'luxurious overfeeding' of the children. Those who do had better try the experiment on their own households, taking care that the test is not vitiated by stealthy and intermediate supplies of cake, fruit, nuts etc. etc.

To Bedford's criticism of the building of a temporary shed for the infant children at a cost of £40, he answered:

In a room thirty feet long and eighteen feet wide, day after day, were 144 human beings crammed to take their meals ... The sub-committee, having visited the infant children in their mess room at tea, were shocked to find the foul state of the atmosphere there existing from so many children being crowded together. The poor things all exhibited a flushed, feverish appearance. Many of these children, moreover, are four in a bed ...³

These two expressions of opinion closed the long conflict between Hall and Bedford. To the end each man attested just as strongly as ever to his own view: Bedford, conservative and immutable, deprecated controversy; Hall, adventurous and flexible, pleaded for free discussion in which every man's facts, figures and deductions might be fairly examined on their intrinsic merits and admitted or rejected accordingly. In July, 1863, Bedford left Hobartton a disappointed man who felt his many services to the community had not been properly recompensed. With Bedford appointed to the position of Medical Inspector of Prisons in New South Wales, the field of social welfare in Hobartton was left wide open to Hall's persuasion.

In spite of the fact that he was not reappointed to the Board of Management of the Queen's Orphan Schools Hall persisted in taking a very active interest in the affairs of the institution. Although debarred from discussions at the Board table, he argued just as vigorously in the columns of the Mercury which staunchly printed his many long letters. No longer diffused by the details of management, he assumed once again the equally important role of observer, critic, counsellor and teacher. He was interested in every small detail. "Even now", he wrote in his criticism of the Estimates of Expenditure for 1863, "I cannot think such

³ Mercury, January 25, 1862.

a large item for washing and needlework necessary", and again, "the convict grey ought not to associate any of our charitable institutions with the old prison discipline". His authority to criticize and fight the children's cause was not questioned; on the contrary, his strong censure of the Orphan School farm led to the setting up of a Commission of Enquiry into its management.

On January 3, 1863, Hall wrote a very special letter to the Mercury.

For many years past I have had the painful task to comment strongly on the excessive mortality in this institution in comparison with the deaths of children of corresponding ages in the island at large, and in the establishments of a like nature in the neighbouring colonies and in Europe. In 1859 important improvements were initiated in the Queen's Asylum in the dieting and hygienic management of the children, but for the previous nineteen years the annual average of deaths was between fifteen and sixteen.

I have now a different tale to tell, which I doubt not will be heard with pleasure by all friends of the children. At my visit yesterday, the 2nd instant, I made a record in the 'Visitors' Book' of which the following is an extract:
 "Praise be to God ! I have the happiness to record that not one death occurred amongst the children in 1862; in fact, not one since the 19th August, 1861. Now that the infant department is removed to the new buildings, the overcrowding which has so long militated against the health of the children can be obviated. I have now sanguine hopes that the mortality in this institution will compare in future advantageously, not only with that of children of the same ages in country districts of the island, but with the best managed establishments of a like nature in Europe.

This praiseworthy effort had been achieved in spite of an epidemic of whooping cough in 1862 and fully substantiated the truth of sanitary reformers' theories.

Everywhere there is abundant room for hygienic improvements and most assuredly in this island, notwithstanding it has one of the most salubrious climates when it can get fair play.⁴

However, the precarious state of Tasmania's economy in January, 1863, did not permit Hall to relax his vigilance; the reforms which he had labored so hard to achieve could easily be lost. Yet, in common with other citizens, he hoped that the newly elected ministry would correct the failings and abuses of its predecessor and institute a better order of things.

In fact, this was not to be. In line with the newly declared policy of retrenchment, a Royal Commission was appointed on February 9 to

⁴ Mercury, January 6, 1863.

enquire into the Public Service to see if any reductions could be made in expenditure without lessening its efficiency, either by consolidation of offices or by reducing the number of persons employed in each department. In its report issued on June 26 covering all departments, including the charitable institutions, the Commission complained of too much milk being given to the children in the Orphan School, and too much bread and meat to the paupers in the Invalid Depot attached to the General Hospital. Although it did not suggest retrenchment, it recommended that the system of management by Boards be replaced by direct Governmental responsibility combined with a larger measure of support for these institutions from the Public.

To those who hoped that a more liberal, socially enlightened approach to life had finally taken root, the Commission's report was a nasty shock which demonstrated only too clearly the limited, fragile structure of modern philanthropic ideas in Hobarton. Reaction was immediate and severe. Once more the progressive, popular element - Crowther, Hunter and Hall - attacked the conservative official group; Crowther concentrated on the General Hospital, Hunter on the Commission's accusations of extravagance by Boards of Management, and Hall on the charitable institutions. Their letters, directed to the members of both Houses of Parliament per favour of the Mercury, were, each in its own way, a remarkable clarion call to the Government for a modern, efficient, unbiased and humane approach to the city's social problems.

Of Hall's many communications to the press, possibly these three, written on July 24, July 31 and August 4, 1863, were amongst the most appealing and defy fitting comment. Surely, it was a heart of stone that was not touched by words such as these:

These destitute incurables deserve from us all that human beings can ever claim from their fellow creatures in the way of charity. They are only paupers because we have excluded them from our hospitals to give our care to more numerous though less pitiable subjects. We are bound to treat them there not as paupers but as patients. The patient who leaves an ordinary well ordered hospital on receiving the fearful sentence that his case is hopeless, has to bear not alone with that doom of despair, he has to lose at the same moment every alleviation which his sufferings had hitherto received. We see numbers suffering agonies of weariness, or losing their last chances of recovery, because they are unable to sit on the hard benches, which are the only alternatives to their beds. At the Brickfields depot, the beds are straw only, not even a hair mattress, or an air cushion, or a water bed, for many bed-ridden for months, with backs mortified from long continued pressure.⁵

⁵ Mercury, July 27, August 4 & 15, 1863.

Intensely disappointed at the Commission's persistent failure to recognize the modern concepts in philanthropy which he had so long and so earnestly advocated, yet still resolute and undaunted, Hall leapt once more to the assistance of the weak and helpless in a fearless, disciplined condemnation of the "strange statements and rash conclusions" in the report which were not sustained by the evidence. Though he had strongly criticized the findings of Commissions before, this time his judgment was keener, his patience less, and his anger and disgust at the failings of officials obvious to all.

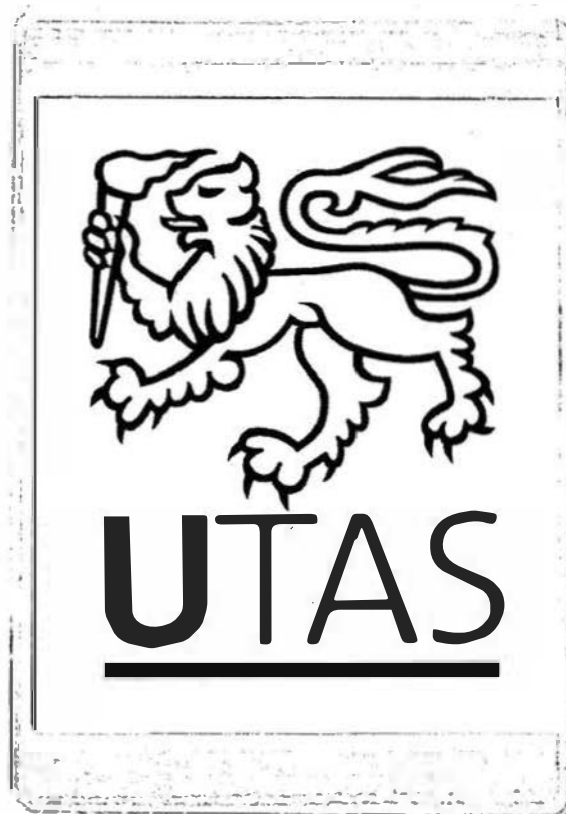
The second paragraph of the report makes the apology of "limited period allowed for a general enquiry" for its very superficial researches, but yet does not hesitate to make assertions and insinuate objections of the most momentous nature to the well being of the charities in question, though announcing at the same time a strong opinion adverse to the principle of Board Management. As this opinion could not be founded on any evidence before the Commission, for none such exists, we have undoubted proof that all the Commissioners who signed that report, without protest, were prejudicial persons to begin with.

Above all, Hall's censure emphasized in no uncertain terms, for the first time, the injustice and evil inherent in the Parliament's careless, ignorant, or even intentional selection of the Commission of Enquiry's personnel and the dire effects to a community of a carelessly compiled report based on insufficient and prejudicial evidence. Indeed, it was time Parliament took a new look at its own attitudes, official procedures, and the activities of its paid servants.

By February 2, 1864, however, it was evident that Hall's efforts on behalf of the Orphan children had borne fruit. At a ceremony of distribution of prizes gained at the annual education exam, Hall, in justice to the Medical Officer, Smart, drew the attention of the Governor to the healthy, happy-looking faces before them and stated that the desire of his heart had been fulfilled, for the children in the institution were now healthier than the children of corresponding ages out of it. The following day he supplied the statistics to the Mercury:

Had the nineteen years' average rate of mortality existed on the increased number of children in the institution in 1863 (500, E.H.) the deaths would have been eighteen instead of two. Sixteen children, therefore, escaped the sentence to a lingering death which in former times was the doom of children sent to the Queen's Orphan Schools. The deaths inflicted on the vilest criminals in the colony, on the average of many years past, have not been nearly so many. The death rate of

children, of ages corresponding to those in the asylum in the rural districts of Tasmania has been about 5 per 1000 per annum. The Queen's Asylum rate for 1863 is only about 4 per 1000 per annum.⁶



⁶ Mercury, February 6, 1864.

CHAPTER 19

COLONIAL PROMOTION

Hall's attempts to improve conditions in the charitable institutions, though significant, were, nevertheless, only a part of his effort to raise the standard of life in Hobart. Although he was now in his late fifties, he was still youthfully eager, enthusiastic and incredibly energetic, undeniably a unique personality; moreover, his keen, active mind was never still, continually searching, analysing, comparing, studying the latest journals and reports from all over the world in the Royal Society, Mechanics' Institute and Parliamentary libraries; in addition, he corresponded widely with well known social reformers and sanitarians whose assistance he often sought and was willingly accorded. Though he loved Tasmania as his adopted country and valued its physical advantages, he deeply deplored the apathy, insularity and backwardness prevalent there. Educated at St. Bartholomew's Medical College, and a classmate in his student days of some of those whose achievements in social and health reform were becoming famous, he felt it his privilege and his duty to strive for the same results in Tasmania, whilst at the same time maintaining his own professional status amongst his compeers overseas; in short, he did not permit his physical isolation from the centres of progress in social science, sanitation and medicine to generate mental and professional isolation also. With the encouraging cooperation of the Mercury, whose vision and understanding of social values were laudable, he relied upon criticism of the "status quo", suggestion and instruction, as well as specific practical reforms, as the essential ingredients of a purposeful programme. Although Hall's efforts were denigrated at times by his critics who complained of his "cacoethes scribendi", "personal virus" and "tiresome hobbies",¹ certainly no one else attempted to make an equally persistent and scientifically enlightened contribution to the development of Hobart society.

¹ Mercury, February 10, 1863.

Specifically, Hall's activities in the early sixties were exceptionally diverse, the details of which revealed some interesting aspects of contemporary life. For instance, on March 6, 1861, he participated in a very notable occasion, the Ceremony of Laying the Foundation Stone of the Great Reservoir by Governor Young

....What a blessing it will be if by that time (next summer) we have baths, wash-houses, fountains and other appurtenances of civilization which - unlike the rest of the world - we have been content to dispense with.²

The main reservoir, in fact, was two and a half miles from the centre of Hobart, would cover seven acres and supply five hundred to six hundred thousand gallons a day. Hall, who seconded Alderman Lipscombe's vote of thanks to the Governor, gave a long and exuberant speech in which he took the opportunity to suggest that a fountain be associated with the proposed monument to the memory of Sir John Franklin; his suggestion was later adopted by the Vice-Regal Commission appointed to carry out this project.

Regularly each month with singular dedication he compiled the mortality statistics and his health report based thereon, which were read at the Royal Society meetings and summarized in the Mercury. In the first half of 1861 he also assisted Abbott to compile "an elaborate and comprehensive" series of forty tables which gave the results of meteorological observations for Hobart Town for twenty years, made at the Royal Observatory, Ross Bank, from January, 1841, to December, 1854, and at Abbott's private observatory from January, 1855, to December, 1860 inclusive. These, printed by the Government Printing Offices, together with Hall's Tables of Mortality for the three half years ending December 1860, plus the last census returns, were forwarded by the Governor to the Secretary of State to enable the climate to be accurately estimated for the benefit of the Indian Sanitary Commission, the Indian Government having recently withdrawn its Sanitarium from the Cape of Good Hope.³ Abbott's tables showed that Hobart registered a higher amount of ozone than any other Australian colony and, indeed, any other place where comparable measurements were made, and that ozone was highest during south and south east winds; Hall in turn found that inflammatory, or sthenic diseases, had a maximum incidence in southerly currents of wind; typhoid, or asthenic diseases, during north and north west winds; therefore, both currents of winds and calms appeared to have their own medico-

² Mercury, March 6, 1861.

³ Mercury, July 29, 1861.

meteorological conditions.⁴ Hall summed up the health situation in Tasmania statistically:

The death rate of all Tasmania, therefore, for the first half of 1861, on this basis, would be $17 \frac{1}{4}$ per 1000 per annum, or one death to 57.38 living. This is nearly one third less than the average rate of England and Wales, and may be taken as a fair indication of the climatic advantages this island enjoys.⁵

Certainly, the mortality statistics were very pleasing, but not so the census returns for 1861. Hall, indeed, was deeply concerned at the situation disclosed by contrasting the figures for 1851 with those for 1861.

	<u>1851</u>	<u>1861</u>
Under 21 years of age both sexes	25,093	42,245
21 to 60 females	12,702	18,399
60 and above, both sexes	1,529	4,166
Total	<u>39,324</u>	<u>64,810</u>
21 to 60, males only	30,806	25,167
<u>Total population</u>	<u>70,130</u>	<u>89,977</u>

Ever since the gold discoveries, and the abandonment of transportation," he wrote on March 8, 1862, "the population of Tasmania has been rapidly undergoing a change in its component elements, which every day adds to the burdens of the principal breadwinners of the island, the males from 21 to 60 years. The old, the young, and the feminine elements - more or less dependent upon the labours of the males aforesaid - have been year after year increasing beyond the proportion of those in the producing class, at a rate without parallel in the old country.These relative disproportions will go on increasing and the facts demand the serious consideration of every thinking man in the country.⁶

Although Hall was the first to draw attention explicitly to the uneven composition of the population and its implications for the economy, a need for some kind of cottage industry to provide remunerative employment for the many children, women, aged and invalids had been recognized for some time. Following the example of the Victorian press which was perseveringly advocating the idea in that colony, the Mercury, sensible as always of its responsibilities to the community, on December 20, 1860, introduced the culture of the silkworm as one possible answer to Tasmania's

⁴ Mercury, August 2, 1861.

⁵ Mercury, July 29, 1861.

⁶ Mercury, March 13, 1862.

unhappy economic predicament. During the next few months the paper pressed the industry strongly in numerous articles, taking its information from a pamphlet published in Victoria. "The Silkworm - its Advantages and how it can be introduced into Australia" by Nevery. To the Mercury's chagrin, however, the idea caught on very slowly; Hall, on the contrary, was most enthusiastic, researching every aspect of the industry relative to Tasmania. In late November, 1861, the Inspector of Schools, Stutzer, in an address to the Royal Society on sericulture disclosed that about five hundred cuttings taken from the mulberrytree in the Botannical Gardens by the curator, F. Abbott (Junior), were thriving, and it was planned to transfer them to the Orphan School grounds to establish the industry there. Immediately a spate of articles on sericulture appeared in the press, including five long communications from Hall on December 17 and 28, January 10, 1862, February 1 and March 8 respectively, embracing the results of his research. On March 14, his and Stutzer's efforts were publicly recognized.

Both to Dr Hall and to Mr Stutzer the public thanks are due, for practical efforts to promote the introduction into the colony of this new branch of industrial enterprise and we trust the result of labors prompted by a generous and unselfish interest in the prosperity of Tasmania, will be the establishment of a new occupation for the people, and a large and profitable addition to the trading resources of the colony.⁷

Despite further lectures by Stutzer in 1862 and a "most interesting and informative" presentation of all stages of silkworm culture at the Art Treasures Exhibition in Hobart Town in January, 1863, by Hall's teenage son, Leventhorpe,⁸ enthusiasm for sericulture slowly died, possibly due to the failure of the young mulberry trees, or more likely still, to human apathy.

In the midst of compiling his essays on sericulture, Hall interposed another on January 4, 1862, which he bluntly entitled "The World Wide Enquiries of the Quarantine Committee of the National Association for the Promotion of Social Science and Tasmanian Shortcomings". As a criticism of the "status quo" it was a masterpiece of exasperation and a remarkable indictment of the official Tasmanian attitude, proving that Hall's impatience and anger at Government ineptitude were justified. As the subject was very meaningful to him as a sanitarian, and his letter

⁷ Mercury, March 14, 1862.

⁸ Mercury, January 1, 1863.

(a special favourite of the author's) epitomized the ceaseless struggle between himself and the official authorities, it is reproduced here in full as an interesting example of Hall's numerous letters to the press.

Sir,

At the meeting in 1858 of the 'National Association for the Promotion of Social Science' the important subject of Quarantine, in its sanitary and commercial aspects, was earnestly discussed; and the result was the formation of a Committee having for its object the collection of data, on which to construct a scheme of 'Quarantine Regulations' in which the principal nations of the earth might harmoniously unite for the common good. The Committee included amongst its members some of the most renowned sanitarians, statisticians, philanthropists in Great Britain. In pursuance of an object so comprehensive, so important, and so honorable to its projectors a series of eighteen queries etc. were drawn up by the Committee for transmission to Governors of colonies, British consuls in foreign countries and others. The Secretaries of State, Lord Malmesbury and Sir E.B. Lytton, caused these 'queries' to be sent to all Her Majesty's consuls abroad, and to the Governors of all British colonies with instructions to further the object in view. They were likewise addressed by the Directors-General of the Army and Navy Medical Departments to the Principal Medical Officers of both services in foreign stations.

In May and August of 1860, abstracts of the replies received were compiled by the Secretary of the Committee, Dr Gavin Milroy, which were laid before the Imperial Parliament and printed. Very recently these documents have been added to the Tasmanian Parliamentary Library.

Quarantine, being a question of sanitary science, which I have taken much interest in, and my assistance having been solicited by the Army Medical authorities - which was unfortunately rendered unavailing by the premature and lamented death of the zealous young medical officer, who was required to make the Report on behalf of his branch of the Public Service - I have naturally anxiously consulted the Parliamentary Papers referred to, to ascertain in what manner the other authorities in this island, on whom the reply to these 'queries' officially devolved, had executed a duty so directly connected with the climatic and sanitary reputation of Tasmania and the commercial interests of its inhabitants. Thirty-four British colonies responded to the queries. All our neighbours in the Southern Hemisphere - Cape of Good Hope, Fremantle, Adelaide, Melbourne, Sydney, New Zealand - were among the number. Tasmania alone made no sign.

Except on the occasion given for demonstrating the probable benefits which would result from the establishment in Tasmania of a Military Medical Sanitarium, and post for convalescents for the Eastern Empire, [Indian Sanitarium Affair: author's note] the Quarantine enquiry presented the best official opportunity that was ever afforded Tasmania of exhibiting her eminently naturally salubrious climate in the most instructive and advantageous light. How the splendid chance of getting

this island chosen the Sanitarium for India, and thus retaining in a more desirable form the material advantages to this colony, of the large pecuniary expenditure of the Imperial treasury, lost to us by the rejection of the Convict system, was thrown away by the blundering and worthless 'Report' which emanated from the Commissioners and disgraced us so at home and in India is well known.

It cannot be said that nothing has ever occurred in Tasmania in connection with Quarantine that afforded data for expatiating on the climatic and other advantages of this favoured island. The visits of the afflicted French discovery ships 'Astrolabe' and 'Le Zelee', the 'Persian' etc., the first introduction and subsequent history of the whooping cough, scarlet fever, measles etc. would have supplied to a competent sanitarian, patriotically earnest for something beyond mere selfish interests, a theme which could have served to exalt the character for salubrity of this island to the high position I ascribed to it in a paper furnished to the Statistical Society which concluded in the following words: 'I think I am now justified in reiterating, as an established fact, the statement I have in various portions of my paper expressed, in effect, that few countries in the world whose medico-vital statistics have been published, can equal this beautiful isle of the South Seas - Young Tasmania - as an abode where the human race may dwell comfortably, healthily, and to a ripe old age, without deteriorating either physically or morally from the elevated position their British progenitors held among the nations of the earth.'

The Quarantine 'health officer' at Sydney, Dr Alleyne has supplied data highly commended by the Secretary to the Quarantine Committee. In fact the abstract for New South Wales is second to none for valuable information. But, alas for Tasmania !

It is to be hoped that some of our legislators - irrespective of all party or personal considerations - will call for all the correspondence on this subject between the Imperial and Tasmanian authorities; and when that item in the 'estimates' which is embodied under 'health officers' comes to be voted, will demand from the Government some explanation on this matter.

It may not yet be forgotten how neglectful the Government here was in failing to supply the representative for Tasmania to the great International Statistical Congress held in London in 1860, with information useful to the interests of this colony. Not so did the neighbouring governments doze in their bureaus.

In Hobart Town the post of Quarantine Health Officer for the last twenty years or so, has been monopolized by one or two pluralists who ought to be compelled to give some account of their stewardship, some useful details of the work they have done for the pay they have received, such as is exacted from their compeers in other colonies. No sinecurists and monopolists of the let-alone, how not to do it, old world school, ought to be tolerated in a colony whose daring motto is 'Advance' and in an age which proclaims the principle of action to be 'Progress, Excelsior'".⁹

⁹ Mercury, January 7, 1862.

Hall's disappointment with Tasmania's failure to keep pace with the rest of the world was keen, and his criticism of lost opportunities to boost its resources and economy direct and unsparing; certainly he himself could not be accused of a similar disregard for the colony's welfare. When Government officials failed to reply to the 'Queries', Milroy chose Hall as his correspondent and requested him to remedy the defect by furnishing a paper on the epidemics and diseases of Tasmania. Fortunately, in March, 1862, a chance to counteract the colony's poor image, or lack of it, overseas was offered by "The International Exhibition of 1862" in London. Hall willingly offered his assistance.

The Exhibition, in which Tasmania eventually took a commendable and satisfying part, originated as far back as July, 1858, when the London Society of Arts urged upon E.B. Lytton, the Secretary to the Colonies,

the desirableness of obtaining periodically from the colonies accurate statements of their resources and the bearings which such resources may have upon commerce.¹⁰

Consequently, on January 6, 1859, Lytton invited the colony to participate in an International Exhibition in 1862, but for twelve months or more, the Government neglected to do anything about it. However, on March 26, 1860, the proposal was submitted to the Royal Society which discussed it on April 25 and authorized Milligan, who was about to leave for London, to contact the Society of Arts. On January 22, 1861, Milligan advised the Royal Society that the Exhibition would open in London on May 1, 1862, and suggested the appointment of commissioners, as in Victoria, to obtain and transmit suitable illustrations of the resources of the colony. Pressurized by the combined exhortations of Milligan in London, the press, and the Royal Society not to neglect such an invaluable opportunity to publicize Tasmania, the Government, on March 8, 1861, appointed eleven commissioners under Crowther's chairmanship, and granted a fund of £2,500 to £3,000 to meet expenses, plus the services of a paid secretary.¹¹ The commission met promptly on March 13 and weekly thereafter. On December 2, 1861, the results of its efforts were locally displayed to the great pride and satisfaction of the community before being dispatched to London; Tasmania had established its identity at last.

Hall's obvious contribution to this historic event was a literary one, on a subject very dear to his heart, "Climate and Health of Tasmania",

¹⁰ Mercury, April 30, 1860.

¹¹ Hobart Town Gazette, March 12, 1861.

which, together with another article, "The Vegetable Products exhibited by Tasmania" by W. Archer F.L.S., constituted the appendix to a pamphlet, The Products and Resources of Tasmania as Illustrated in the International Exhibition 1862 by George Whiting, Secretary to the International Exhibition Commissioners for Tasmania, issued by the commissioners for distribution in London.

To Hall and Abbott the invitation to contribute to the Exhibition Pamphlet was a timely and well-deserved recognition of their long, persistent, time-consuming effort to put meteorological research in Tasmania on a sound scientific basis, and to establish the relationship, if any, between climatic factors and disease; the Pamphlet, in fact, offered them an excellent opportunity to publish a summary of the results of their research to a wide reading public. Abbott's 40 Tables of Meteorology and the article, "Climate and Health of Tasmania", by Hall were, therefore, two landmarks in the history of the Science of Meteorology in Tasmania to this date - March, 1862.

In keeping with the importance of the occasion and his scientific theme, Hall's style was scholarly and dignified, precise and informative, yet full of interest, as his articles invariably were; in fact, when he chose to discipline himself carefully, Hall was a very capable writer, as this article proved. In "Climate and Health" he endeavoured to establish the truth, based on "carefully conducted observations, with accurate long continued records, carefully tabulated",¹² and consequently to correct in the eyes of the public the unfortunate, harmful impressions of Tasmania given during the Indian Sanitarium and the Quarantine Committee Affairs. In so doing, he and Abbott placed Tasmania, climatically and healthwise, in its rightful place amongst the Australian colonies. Of course, Hall did not restrict himself to a compendium of meteorological facts and figures; instead he prefaced his detailed discussion of weather data with a brief synopsis of modern developments in social and medical science. He began with three quotations:

"A sound body is better than immense revenues"

"There are no riches above the riches of the health of the body; and there is no pleasure above the joy of the heart"

"Better is a poor man who is sound and strong of constitution, than a rich man who is weak and afflicted with evils -

Ecclesiasticus."

¹² "Climate and Health of Tasmania", p. 43.

In the long, unceasing struggle over the ages to attain this most important asset in life, health, Hall believed the new science of "Statistics" had played an outstanding part.

From the date of the application of the science of numbers - statistics - to cosmical variations and vital phenomena and disease, are the grand triumphs of modern hygiene to be dated. The facts and figures collected, arranged, expounded and disseminated by the Registrar-General of England, and his numerous co-adjutors of the medical profession, were the great levers which enabled sanitary reformers to effect their brave and bloodless victories. Dr William Farr has been the "thauma-turgus" - the wonder-worker of the age we live in, and the figures he has arranged, and the centres of disease-breeding he has indicated, with the unsparing exposure of their origin in the neglect of Nature's own sanitary teachings, has opened an entirely new sphere for medical practice. The master minds of the profession are now assuming the first duty of medical skill to be to prevent disease. The curative department is rapidly becoming a secondary branch in the exercise of medical science. Whenever these new principles - new at least comparatively to any extent in practice - have been fairly acted upon, human lives have been saved by thousands. We now scrutinize suspiciously every mortuary record where the deaths exceed a certain assumed normal standard. No longer can the unphilosophical oi-polloi safely mask their ignorance and attribute excessive mortality to recondite causes, or take shelter in vague generalities, and the untangible, mystic influence of the weather.¹³

Continuing, Hall implied the motive behind his own great interest in meteorology and his ready assistance to Abbott's research; meteorologists, he maintained, had provided invaluable data which assisted sanitarians in their reasoning and in constructing their reforms. In this respect, Tasmania had been more fortunate than other colonies in having been selected as one of the localities for a Magnetical and Meteorological Observatory at the suggestion of the British Association. Now, as Sir Thomas Maclear of the Observatory at the Cape of Good Hope asserted, Abbott's 40 Tables were a standard of reference, leaving nothing to be desired for the climate of Tasmania.¹⁴

In his detailed analysis of the meteorological data, based on Abbott's work, Hall included some items of more than usual interest which are tabulated here for the sake of brevity.

1. It is remarkable that diseases of the "Brain and Nervous system" give more deaths in proportion to the total from all causes in Tasmania, than in either Victoria or New South Wales.

¹³ Ibid., p. 42 & 43.

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 43.

2. The extent of cloudy sky has been registered for twenty-one years, and the mean is 5.65. The mid-winter month of July is the least cloudy. Often in the months of April, May, June, July, August, we have a week at a time with a bright, cloudless sky. This is the pleasantest season of the year, and a delightful contrast to the bleak, pinching winters of the north.
3. Ozonometrical records have been kept since April, 1859. The annual mean is 6.87 by Schönbein's chromatic scale, and by far exceeds any records for the adjoining colonies, or those at home, which have fallen under my observation. Those months which have the greatest rainfall, and the largest number and force of ocean winds, exhibit the greatest amount of free ozone.
4. On the other hand, when the pure ozonized breezes from the sea prevail, health is at the highest.
5. Though I treat of winds the last, I feel assured that scarcely any other atmospheric phenomena more powerfully influence health.
6. I have contributed to Mr Abbott's work, a four years' calculation of averages, as to number and force of winds.

From his survey of 'means' and 'averages' Hall deduced that the Tasmanian climate was a decidedly breezy and invigorating one, with clear skies, an abundance of ozone and bracing sea breezes,

where the lamp of life burns quickly as well as brightly.¹⁵

To those who unwittingly had gained a false impression of his beloved island to its detriment he gave his considered opinion that it was man's own fault if the best health and the highest chances of long life were not attained in such a picturesque and genial climate.

By late March, 1862, a subtle change in Hall's manner of disseminating new ideas was discernible, possibly due to the termination of his irritating feud with Bedford, perhaps to his realization that ignorance and incomprehension, rather than obstruction and neglect, were the reasons for opposition to his proposals for reform. This less aggressive, more gracious and understanding attitude was particularly noticeable in an article "Tasmania Produced Oatmeal" in which he gently endeavoured to persuade Tasmanians to assist their own economy by buying good, home-grown produce such as oatmeal, whilst at the same time instructing them in sound nutritional values.¹⁶

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 47.

¹⁶ Mercury, March 31, 1862.

Charitable institutions, meteorological research, sericulture, the Exhibition Pamphlet, diet and nutrition; chairman of the Executive Committee of the Benevolent Society, member of the Board of Management of the Servants' Home,¹⁷ chief Catholic layman, supporter of every worthwhile cause in the community, private practitioner, Municipal Council medical attendant on the Hobart Police Station from May 8, 1862,¹⁸ medical scientist, statistician, sanitarian - for Hall the early sixties were years rich in variety and experience, effort and achievement. With recognition and success, both at home and overseas, came also the satisfaction of knowing that, owing to his own determination, Tasmania was amply documented in medical and scientific circles, and its importance as an Australian colony recognized.¹⁹ Indeed, his services as an intermediary between the Government authorities in Tasmania and overseas scientific bodies were recognized and occasionally solicited, as did the Assistant-Secretary (F.W. Haddon) of the Statistical Society of London in a letter to Hall, dated February 21, 1862.

I avail myself of this opportunity to solicit your good offices in obtaining for the society a regular transmission of the statistical publications published in Tasmania. From the other Australian colonies we obtain a tolerably regular supply from the Government offices, but with the exception of a stray volume or two, we have nothing from Tasmania.²⁰

Yet, Hall personally had little faith in the reliability of officials to promote Tasmania and preferred to do what he could himself. On July 7, 1862, his paper "Vital Statistics of Tasmania in 1861" was one of three read before a distinguished audience at the Epidemiological Society of London, its Foundation President, Dr B.G. Babington in the Chair. . The paper was subsequently published in The Transactions of the Epidemiological Society Part III Volume I and reviewed by the Lancet (July, 1862) and the British Medical Journal (August, 1862). Amongst its details, Hall was happy to relate that the Tasmanian death rate for 1861 was only a trifle more than 16.25 per 1000, or one death in about 60.85 individuals, less than the normal standard of mortality of 17 per 1000 found in the sixty-three healthiest registration districts of England and Wales. Of the 1,479 deaths, only 323 were under one year of age, notwithstanding the great preponderance of infants to the mass of the

¹⁷ Mercury, September 10, 1861.

¹⁸ Mercury, May 8, 1862.

¹⁹ See under E.S. Hall, References to Australia in British Medical Journals prior to 1880 by A. Lovell and B. Gandevia (Medical Society of Victoria, 1961).

²⁰ CSD 4/37/450.

enumerated population. Interestingly, he disclosed that 1861 was remarkable for the great rainfall, 28.19 inches, exceeding the twenty years' standard mean by 6.61 inches.

On October 23, 1862, Hall completed the paper "On the Epidemic Diseases of Tasmania" requested by Milroy for the Quarantine Committee.

It is much to be regretted that the queries of the Quarantine Committee, forwarded by the Secretary of State, did not elicit any response from the Tasmanian authorities; I have done my best to remedy the neglect.

This was certainly true, as the article was his most ambitious, and was highly regarded in the science of medicine. On April 6, 1863, it was read by Milroy to the Epidemiological Society and subsequently published in that society's Transactions, Part II Volume II. Like Abbott's 40 Tables of Meteorology it was the culmination of over twenty years of observation and research into the colony's diseases, and consequently of inestimable value to the Australian medical historian. Cumpston, indeed, in 1923, described it as a "most exhaustive and valuable paper" and its author as "the pioneer epidemiologist of the Australian colonies".²¹

As a product of his mature years, the article was clear, straightforward and simple in arrangement. After a brief statistical introduction he merely tabulated each disease which had appeared in the island, and discussed its origin, history, incidence, and sometimes treatment, concentrating on the broad social implications of each epidemic rather than on small medical details, in accordance with his life-long custom of looking upon 'unhealth' as a social malady, not a physical one peculiar to an individual. Told in his inimitable fashion, the story of Tasmania's early diseases was a fascinating one. Measles, he found, was first introduced from an unknown source in the early part of 1854, and had reached epidemic proportions again in 1861; scarlatina first appeared epidemically in 1843, and again in 1853 and 1858; diphtheria "this novel disease" was first observed almost simultaneously in two inland districts of the island (New Norfolk and Oatlands) in January, 1859. According to Cumpston, Hall's remarks on diphtheria revealed "a lively spirit of investigation" on his part. At a time when diphtheria was still considered a "filth" disease, he wrote

The first deaths in Hobarton were two children, brought to the city for medical treatment from Oatlands In the same family two other children had previously died there with the disease, and three of their cousins. The next death in this city occurred in April, though it was registered as from croup. The fourth, a young lady of eighteen, was a well-marked case which removed all

²¹ H.L. Cumpston "The First Australian Sanitarian", Health, April 1923, p. 89.

doubt as to the nature of the affection which had existed in the three first cases, in the opinions of the medical attendants. A direct communication between the two first and the fourth individual was traced out. In this year a case here and there is constantly coming under treatment I have traced communication, however, between patients attacked, though living far apart in the city.

As a sanitarian, Hall was particularly interested in Typhoid Fever, to which disease he paid considerable attention in his paper, describing in detail the epidemic of 1839-40 amongst the convicts and its introduction by the "Persian" in 1857. In most of these epidemics Hall stressed the high incidence of deaths in the Orphan Schools.

1854 Measles

Hobarton District - 44 deaths - of these 27 in the Orphan School.

1861 Measles

Hobarton District - 55 deaths - of these 13 in the Orphan School.

1843 Scarlatina

Hobarton District - 43 deaths - of these 18 in the Orphan School.

1853 Scarlatina

Hobarton District - 230 deaths - Orphan School spared owing to strict quarantine.

1855 Whooping Cough

Hobarton District - 31 deaths - of these 7 in the Orphan School.

In view of the opposition he had always encountered to his health and sanitary reforms, Hall, rightly enough, referred to his own work:

No official tables of the "causes" of death have ever been compiled; and, until 1855, when I exerted myself to improve the study of vital statistics, the information given was meagre and of little value. I have for many years compiled every month a 'health report' for the Hobarton Registration District, arranging the particulars in conformity with the nosology and classification agreed upon at the International Statistical Congress held in Paris in 1855, and analysing the details in connection with the meteorological phenomena.

In discussing his efforts to bring about reform he was matter-of-fact and hopeful of further improvement. Of the Orphan School, he wrote:

So far this year (October 23rd) no deaths have occurred in the institution. The death rate for children of the same ages and number in country districts is less than three per annum. I have therefore some fruits to show as the result of my persevering endeavor for many years past to reform the sanitary condition of this interesting charity, notwithstanding the bitter opposition I have encountered. The end is not yet.

In the city of Hobarton, also, he considered 'the end was "not yet"':

The annual average of deaths from all causes in the Hobartton registration district in the five years ending 1857-1861 was $602 \frac{3}{5}$, which gives a death rate of about 24 per 1000 per annum - the population in 1861 was 24,773. Contrasted with the rural death rate of 12 per 1000, there is an enormous disparity, which cannot be attributed to any other causes than those which produce similar results in the cities of the Old World, viz., the neglect of sanitary measures. No city could have a more healthy and more advantageous site than Hobartton, but defective water supply, inefficient sewerage, cesspools, internment of the dead in the midst of the living, great disregard of ventilation, etc., existed during the period under review, and still exist, although I trust it will be but for a short time longer. In a few weeks, a water supply of incomparable purity will be in full operation. Measures have been also initiated for a thorough system of sewerage. Other sanitary defects, it is to be hoped, will be reformed sooner or later.²²

In its review on July 25, 1863, the British Medical Journal considered that the paper reflected the highest credit on Hall's professional zeal and intelligence. However, The British and Foreign Medico-Chirurgical Review, whilst it agreed the article was well written, was not altogether satisfied that the high incidence of diseases of the nervous and circulating systems, higher than in Britain, was due to the sudden and great changes of temperature to which the climate was subject, as he suggested.²³ Hall described the Society's reaction to his paper in a letter to the Colonial Secretary, J. Whyte, on July 9, 1863.

I had a special note of thanks from the Epidemiological Society of London, which has elected me an Honorary Corresponding Member. In the discussion that ensued when Dr Milroy read my communication, my sanitary labours were highly eulogized by the most eminent men of the day in this department of medical science. Especially may I refer to that of Dr Farr, the head of the Vital Department of the Registry of England and Wales, being the first authority in the world on everything that related to Public Health.²⁴

By early 1863 Hall's credibility was assured, yet success had not been won without personal suffering; certainly he would have been less than human if the long struggle and bitter opposition had not distressed him. Especially, he found it difficult to forgive the Indian Sanitarium Commissioners whose unworthy report had thrown such a poor light on Tasmania overseas. Therefore, when he received a copy of

²² E.S. Hall, "On the Epidemic Diseases of Tasmania", Trans. Epid. Soc. London, 1867, Vol. 2, pp. 69-87.

²³ The British and Foreign Medico-Chirurgical Review, Jan-April 1866, Vol. 37, p. 246.

²⁴ CSD 4/44/B602.

the second of the Annual Statistical, Sanitary and Medical Reports of the British Army Medical Department, he immediately reaffirmed the correctness of his own viewpoint.

It is a large octavo volume of nearly 500 pages and abounds with information of the most comprehensive and valuable nature as to the fruits of the reforms initiated by the Army Sanitary Commission, of which the lamented Lord Herbert was chairman. Were I to extract largely on all the points which bear upon my labors as a Sanitary Reformer in this colony, I should occupy an undue space in your columns, but I purpose from time to time to furnish you with such condensed notices as will show that most of what have been designated "Dr Hall's tiresome hobbies" have proved to be truths of the utmost practical value.

By means of sanitary reforms similar to those he had advocated in Tasmania, the death rate in the British army had been reduced from 17 $\frac{1}{2}$ per 1000, to 9.95 and in some special camps to 7.57. In the Australian command, in which Tasmania was included, the overall mortality rate was still 14.75 per 1000, showing that in Australia sanitary reform had not progressed as it ought to have done; in Tasmania itself, the Indian Sanitarium Commission had shown so little knowledge and appreciation of statistical values that it had offered as acceptable a standard of 11.80 which had immediately evoked from the Imperial authorities orders for various important improvements to the Barracks. Hall could not refrain from rubbing the lesson in:

Those who remember what I wrote on this subject in 1858 in my "Review of the Report of the Board of Commissioners" ... will now see how my principles of dieting, applied to prisoners and children as well as soldiers, are supported by the highest authority in the Army Medical Department.²⁵

Actually, Hobarton required no further proof of Hall's sincerity and correctness: his constant harping about mortality rates, sanitation and health reforms had finally pierced its armour of apathy, ignorance and indifference; now it was prepared to listen, and, with new understanding and purpose, to acknowledge and honour him as its sanitarian. This, indeed, came about when the newly-formed Physical, Mathematical and Chemical Section of the Royal Society under its chairman, Abbott, appointed Hall on April 7, 1863, to a sub-committee to consider the question of Hydraulics with reference to the water supply of Hobart Town, particularly as regards its application to sanitary purposes and the construction of fountains, baths and showers. Subsequently, on May 5, the Physical Section decided that the sub-committee's report, plus a

²⁵ Mercury, February 10, 1863.

"carefully elaborated" paper by Hall should be sent to the next meeting of the Society for reading and discussion. This paper, "Hydraulics", on May 12 and a second, "Sewerage", on July 14 could well be regarded as the apex of Hall's career as a sanitarian. Both were informative and immensely interesting.²⁶

The first, "Hydraulics" was a hymn of praise to the civil engineers, to whom medical sanitary reformers were indebted for the great improvements in health, comfort and prolonged life, and a song of thanksgiving for the new water supply which Hall described in detail, from the "cool transparent and delicious water" of the catchment area on Mount Wellington to the results of his own chemical analysis of tap water and experiments in lead content. To counteract those who still quibbled at the cost of construction, he dwelt at length on its benefits as a sanitary measure to the health of the community. Amongst the many he cited was the provision of bathing facilities.

Public baths are a great desideratum in Hobarton. It would be superfluous to dwell on the great sanitary advantage of frequent ablutions of the whole body. Much as this is generally neglected, I believe it arises more from the want of convenience than from either ignorance or apathy. If the 28 miles of sewer pipes in the skin of a human being are choked by dirt, other organs have to be overworked to remove the effete matters of the body, and this cannot long continue without serious derangements to health. At present I am ashamed to state, the only establishment where bath accommodation, on a sufficient scale is provided for cleanliness and health is the public gaol. In our Asylum for destitute children, 170 girls have one incommensurate bath, but the 190 boys and the 130 infants, aged 3 to 6, no bath provision at all. Our public Hospitals and Invalid Asylums are equally defective. So that poverty and infirmity are less cared for than crime.

As a medical practitioner with first hand acquaintance of the dire consequences of filthy, uncleansed water casks, unwashed bodies and lack of proper washing facilities, Hall was immensely thankful that the problems of Hobart's water-supply had been satisfactorily solved, and considered any price trifling in comparison with the boon now being enjoyed.

In his second paper, "Sewerage", Hall had the more difficult task of persuading his fellow citizens that a comprehensive sewerage scheme was equally necessary in the interests of health. To counteract the objections raised against the heavy additional cost, he elaborated once again, unreservedly and at length, the fearful consequences of

²⁶ P. & P.R.S., May 1863 & July 1863.

"filth fevers" both in England and in Tasmania; his persistence in repeating this story time and time again was surely remarkable. Amongst the many examples he quoted were these:

...Liverpool, too, I may properly cite, as it was in this gigantic commercial town, I acquired my first impulse to the pursuit of sanitary knowledge from witnessing in its cellars, courts and garrets, the terrible results of unsanitary conditions. The rate of mortality during my long experience there was as high as 39 per 1000; it is now less than 27, the saving being nearly 4,000 human lives per annum. It has, however, cost an enormous sum to effect this....

In a paper to the Epidemiological Society of London, I have spoken largely on this subject and illustrated it forcibly by the history of the terrible fever which was imported by a convict ship in August 1839, and which spread so extensively and destructively amongst those with whom it was so injudiciously brought into contact, in those days of disregard to quarantine. Upwards of 900 cases were treated in Hobart hospitals alone and seventy eight died within twelve months from its commencement.

Hall considered that Hobart was without any comprehensive well-connected scheme of sewerage and drainage: what did exist was partial and objectionable in form, capacity and material. After describing its most offensive manifestations, he proposed an effective system based on the writings of Robert Rawlinson of the English Sanitary Commissions. Some of Hall's words would bear weight even today:

I will not enter upon the discussion of the economical disposal of the sewage for agricultural purposes, but it does seem a terrible waste to throw such valuable fertilizing materials into the sea. It will, however, be a serious consideration for the engineer whether the present outlet ought to be continued in use. As a sanitarian I am quite satisfied it will ultimately be most detrimental to the healthy condition of our beautiful and commodious harbor.

Since Hobart Town had come under municipal government, its rate of mortality had improved; Hall hoped that efficient sewerage would reduce the death rate to the level of the rural areas.

S E C T I O N F O U R

COLONIAL OFFICER

1863 - 1881

CHAPTER 20

VACCINATION

Hall's two lectures on "Hydraulics" on May 12 and July 14, 1863, ended another chapter in his life. His lot as sanitarian and health reformer had proved disappointing and thankless as far as Hobart was concerned; in fact, he had neither illusions nor reservations about it. In his candid letter to Whyte on July 9 he actually drew official attention to his anomalous position in the community.

It is well known to yourself and the public of Tasmania that I have been for years indefatigable in advocating sanitary improvements in this island, and in establishing on sound statistical data its legitimate claims to be considered one of the most salubrious climates in the world. I have stood well nigh alone in this arduous and disinterested task. It is true that I have won honours thereby from Medical and Scientific Societies of the neighbouring colonies and in England. The most eminent periodical of the world, the Lancet, in lauding my sanitary exertions, affixed to me the special distinction of being 'The Sanitarian of Tasmania'. In the Medical Society of Victoria, when I was elected an Honorary Member, I was proclaimed to be 'the ablest authority on Medico-Vital Statistics in the Southern Hemisphere'. I believe that I am the only Medical Practitioner in Tasmania who has contributed to Medical and Scientific Literature, or won thereby any honourable recognition from medical and scientific bodies elsewhere.¹

Yet, despite his impressive record, Hall had received no employment from the Colonial Government. It was certainly an odd situation, which, fortunately, the pressure of circumstances did not allow to continue.

On June 20, 1863, four days after the new session of Whyte's Ministry began, the colonists learnt via the English mail that smallpox was raging fearfully in London; worse still, ships had lately arrived in the neighbouring colonies from England with cases of the disease on board. Hall immediately warned again, as he had done so many times before, that the population was in danger by neglecting the provisions of the Compulsory Vaccination Act (17th Victoria No. 20), 1853, and induced

¹ CSD 4/44/B602.

J. Perkins to question in Parliament what measures the Government was taking to prevent the spread of the disease to Tasmania. In consequence of his question-without-notice and the exhortations of the press, the Executive acted promptly on June 22 with instructions to the police throughout the colony to enforce the provisions of the act by which parents were liable to a penalty of £5 if their child above the age of six months and under fourteen years were not vaccinated: in addition, fifty caution posters were sent out to municipalities, and the Health Officers of the ports of Hobart Town, Launceston and George Town ordered to enforce the provisions of the Quarantine Act (5th Victoria No. 14) against all vessels arriving from Great Britain and also New Zealand (as from July 30).²

However, on June 23, the Attorney-General admitted that the existing law on vaccination was inadequate and that a new proposition was about to be submitted to Parliament to remedy its defects; clearly, Hall was having some success in influencing the thinking of the Ministry. On July 7 M. Miller* introduced the draft of an Amended Compulsory Vaccination Bill, the most novel and important clauses of which provided for the division of the island into vaccination districts and the appointment of public vaccinators with the power of house to house visitation to inspect and vaccinate all persons requiring it.

In his determination to secure improved legislation, both now and for many years to come, Hall was strongly influenced by his extensive experience of a virulent form of smallpox in the crowded cellars and garrets of Liverpool, the city with the highest death ratio in England (an indelible impression not shared by his fellow doctors in Hobart), and by the findings of the Smallpox and Vaccination Committee of the Epidemiological Society. Right from its inception in 1850, this Society established a number of influential committees of which the "Smallpox and Vaccination" was perhaps the most important and the most productive of results. In its Commemorative Volume the Society wrote:

It may, indeed, be said of the efforts of this committee that they were almost epoch making. The attention of the Society was from its earliest days turned towards bringing about such legislation as would tend to reduce the heavy death toll (some 5,000 deaths yearly) from smallpox.³

Because the English Act failed to ensure the vaccination of all children born, the Society frequently petitioned Parliament for more stringent

* Seat in Executive Council without office.

² CSD 4/42/575.

³ The Commemoration Volume of the Epidemiological Society of London, founded 1850, p. 10.

measures, embodying the principle of house-to-house visitation. As Hall corresponded on the level of personal friendship with Milroy, who became the Society's President in 1866-7, and enthusiastically followed and contributed to its literature and scientific life, his work was a deliberate attempt to introduce into Tasmania the latest research findings of the Vaccination Committee. In fact, he stated this intention on September 10.

In exerting myself so actively to obtain the most complete protection possible of the whole population from the horrors of a possible invasion of smallpox, I have been merely an exponent of the views of a society in London, the 'Epidemiological' constituted of members of the highest standing in every branch of the medical profession and specially of all those eminent as sanitary philanthropists, health officers, etc., the Queen's medical adviser amongst the number.⁴

In view of the fact that house to house visitation was not accepted by the English Parliament, though urgently and repeatedly recommended by the Smallpox and Vaccination Committee, Hall's attempt to introduce the practice in Tasmania was bold and courageous, completely in accord with the most modern scientific and medical research overseas. Naturally, this new approach met with a mixed reception from the community and some medical practitioners, though undoubtedly of great worth in itself. The story of Hall's persistent, prolonged attempt to accomplish his aim in a small, isolated, far distant colony is, therefore, singularly interesting, if not extraordinary.

Two days after his Vaccination Bill was submitted to Parliament, Hall applied for the position of Quarantine Health Officer for the Port of Hobart, which was about to become vacant on Bedford's departure to Sydney, and for which he considered himself ideally suited at such a critical time.

It is most important to the vital and commercial interests of the colony that the holder of that office should be by habits, study etc., specially fitted for the duty", he wrote to the Colonial-Secretary on July 9. "I am the Senior Medical Practitioner in Hobart; my habits, it is well known, are such that at any hour of night and day, I shall be found prompt and able to discharge the duty required from me.⁵

Both for financial (he had a large household of nine to support) and psychological reasons, Hall was desperately anxious to obtain the

⁴ Mercury, Sept. 12, 1863.

⁵ CSD 4/44/B602.

appointment; that he should have felt compelled to write such a pleading letter to the Executive was a revealing reflection on the judgment and partisanship of that body; that he was overlooked on August 3 in favour of Benson, formerly Medical Superintendent of the Orphan Asylum, who had little interest in or knowledge of Public Health, was even more so.

Actually, Hall was not the only one to recognize the need for quick, purposeful action. As nothing had been done officially by the Hobart Hospital Board, the House Surgeon, or other Honorary Medical Officers, Crowther, 'very praiseworthy'⁶ in the Mercury's opinion, directed two of his medical students, E.L. Crowther and G. Stokell, to attend the hospital daily from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. to vaccinate all and sundry. Vaccinations began on July 15 with lymph supplied from a private patient; on the same day, the Hospital Board authorized Turnley, the Resident Medical Officer, to advertise that vaccinations would be performed daily at the hospital, although, oddly enough, no special provisions were made by him to carry them out. For the first two weeks the demand for vaccination by the students was not great, but after the Gazette announcement, it became enormous; however, they contrived to keep a register, referring all doubtful cases to the House Surgeon for consideration.

Meanwhile, on August 5 the Vaccination Bill was read in Parliament for the second time. As house to house visitation did, indeed, prove unpopular, the matter was referred to a Select Committee composed of Officer, Knight, Sharland, M. Miller and the Colonial Treasurer; Doctors Smart, Crowther, Turnley, Agnew, Carns, Doughty and Hall gave evidence. On September 3 Miller brought up the Committee's report which concluded that the present law was altogether unsatisfactory, useless and inoperative; that a large and most dangerous proportion of the children in the colony was unprotected, and that no measure short of house to house visitation could effectually secure the community from smallpox. In fact, the Committee of Enquiry, basing its report solely on the evidence of medical men, entirely agreed with Hall, whose own evidence was, by far, the longest and most detailed, and constituted a concise survey of vaccination in Britain, in Europe and in Tasmania.

However, Hall's task to ensure the proper vaccination of all persons in the colony was not an easy one: in the community, even amongst the medical fraternity itself, there was, naturally enough, a lack of knowledge and misunderstanding. Hall, therefore, was obliged continuously

⁶ Mercury, Sept. 18 & Oct. 19, 1863.

to correct false impressions and irresponsible attitudes, to sound warnings, and to give the necessary scientific facts. To Miller's carefully worded question if many non-medical persons vaccinated, he replied:

I have found such to be the case in many parts of the colony. Old women are reported to do so with needles in Hobart Town; but, worse than all, I have heard that matter from cows' teats has been used, under the impression that it was the genuine cow pox. Of course, it is known to all well-informed men that smallpox has not yet existed in cows in Tasmania, and, therefore, the introduction of it into the human system from the cow could not yet be effected. The spurious matter of other diseases thus propagated may cause very serious evils.⁷

Again, when Dr J. Grant of Launceston suggested in the Cornwall Chronicle on August 31 that farmers should notify medical men if they saw pimples or pustules on the udders or teats of cows in order to secure a more effective supply of lymph, Hall accused him of causing "irreparable mischief". Thence ensued a sharp exchange of medical opinion in which Hall was accused once more of "cacoethes scribendi" to which he angrily retorted:

My 'cacoethes scribendi' in the cause of humanity, sanitary improvements and national progress, having won for me the honours and commendations of the highest authorities in the medical and allied sciences in England and elsewhere, I can afford to smile at the low estimate at which Dr Grant rates my zealous, persevering and unselfish labors. Possibly, I might have better served my own pecuniary interests in bucolic speculations, and by disregarding the honorary claims which medical science etc. has upon every medical man to aid in its advancement.⁸

He then obliterated Grant's statements in a long, scientific discussion of the medical intricacies of vaccination with quotations from the writings of Jenner and the "ever-to-be-quoted" Ceely of Aylesbury, maintaining that Grant had proved beyond all doubt that he, at least, had not read all that had been said and done in connection with vaccination up to the present time; indeed, Hall had good reason to believe that he alone in Tasmania possessed the books alluded to. Actually, he was annoyed with Grant for bringing the subject into public debate and casting suspicion on the efficacy of the lymph obtainable in Tasmania, arming "all prejudiced and careless parents with a feasible excuse for refusing or delaying the

⁷ H.A.P., 1863/90, S2, p. 13.

⁸ Mercury, Sept. 1, 5 & 12, 1863.

vaccination of their children"; this at a time when the medical practitioners in Hobarton, almost without exception, were doing their utmost to get all unprotected persons vaccinated, and an efficient law enacted to replace the inoperative one. Hall considered Grant's letters obstructive, and any medical discussions should have been reserved for their correct place in the Australian Medical Journal.

During the slow, legislative procedures, Crowther's students were busily vaccinating at the General Hospital. As he knew Parliament would soon be terminating its session, Crowther, on September 3, took the matter into his own hands, bypassed the Hospital Board and wrote directly to the Colonial Treasurer to inform him of the heavy work load of the two young men.

Up to yesterday (September 2nd) 1,250 cases had been successfully vaccinated, numbers coming not only from the town and suburbs, but from great distances, such as the Huon, New Norfolk, Brighton etc. The daily average number of applicants is upwards of ninety, and rapidly increasing. The demand is now so great, and the labor imposed upon the students so onerous that a stop will at once be put to a work so auspiciously begun, unless some monetary provision be made to secure the services of the gentlemen in question. From information obtained, I believe (at the present rate) it will be six or seven weeks before the whole can be vaccinated, a matter of the greatest importance to the community, more particularly when smallpox is, I may say, at our doors. I venture to suggest that the sum of £100 be awarded to each of the students, with an official notification thanking them for their gratuitous service up to the present time, and that they be requested to carry the work to completion.⁹

Although the Mercury agreed with Crowther's suggestion, and considered everything was being done that was necessary, Hall's reaction and that of officials differed. Crowther's letter was immediately forwarded for comment to the Hospital Board, which, angry at being bypassed, referred it to a committee composed of the Resident Medical Officer, Turnley, and Honorary Medical Officers Bright, Smart and Butler, for consideration. In spite of Crowther's protests, the Committee recommended that the two students be merely thanked for their services. In Parliament, the Whyte administration also adopted a more enlightened approach; although the Amended Compulsory Vaccination Bill was withdrawn on September 11 on the House wishing to try the voluntary principle first, provision was made for the gratuitous vaccination of the poor by approving the appointment of a number of legally qualified medical practitioners as

⁹ Mercury, Sept. 9, 1863.

public vaccinators.

Hall's influence on the two decisions was obvious. He, in turn, was guided by the Presidential Address to the Epidemiological Society on November 5, 1860, given by Dr B.G. Babington who said:

The perfect performance of vaccination is a point to which too much attention cannot be given, but to which, it is to be feared, too little has hitherto been paid. One cannot but rejoice that by recent regulations, no one who was not qualified as a medical practitioner previous to the issue of them, will be allowed in future to take upon himself the office of public vaccinator without having attended for instruction or examination in the vaccinating stations designated for the purpose by the National Vaccine establishment, and that public vaccinators are now required to vaccinate according to definite instructions which have been issued under powers conferred by Act of Parliament on the Lords of the Council¹⁰

On September 12, the day after the Parliamentary decision, Hall, in accordance with this expression of medical and scientific opinion, explained the situation to the Public: to have permitted Crowther's students to continue vaccinating at the Hospital would not have been in accordance with the authorized "Instructions to Public Vaccinators" which was a document drawn up by J. Simon, Medical Officer to the Privy Council, and issued by Lord Salisbury, President of the Council, under the provisions of the English Health Act of 1858, and later published in the Lancet on March 26, 1859. Hall insisted that these instructions were called for in consequence of the negligent and imperfect manner in which even medical men who were legally qualified to practise, performed vaccinations, or by devolving them upon their pupils; the manual operation was easy enough, but the judgment necessary to know from whom and to whom the disease should be propagated required special study and extensive experience; he, therefore, published the "Instructions" for the general enlightenment of the community.¹¹

On October 29, 1863, at a meeting of the Executive Council, twenty medical practitioners in various districts of the island were given temporary appointments as vaccinators. Hall was appointed to the district of Hobarton and made Superintendent of Vaccination at a salary of £150 per year; Maddox in Launceston received £125, Coverdale in Richmond £100, and country vaccinators £50 each, some being responsible for several areas,

¹⁰ Transactions of the Epidemiological Society, Vol. 1, p. 141.

¹¹ Mercury, Sept. 17, 1863.

the total amount disbursed being £1,380 a year, which, in the opinion of the Mercury, now wedded to a policy of severe retrenchment by the Government, was a "perfect waste of money". As the Mercury had shown considerable tolerance and understanding, even support for Hall's health and social reforms in the past, its attack on the appointments was surprising.

Half that money, or two thirds at the utmost the paper wrote censorially on August 12, 1864,

ought to answer every purpose. But Government supporters had to be rewarded, Government opponents to be punished, and Government influence to be extended, and these vaccination appointments seem to have been thought as good an instrument for the accomplishment of these various purposes as any other.¹²

Tasmania's voluntary scheme of vaccination commenced on November 2, 1863, on the understanding that, if it failed, an Amended Compulsory Vaccination Act would be enacted. Hall vaccinated every Saturday morning at the Public School at New Town, moving thence to O'Brien's Bridge and, later, to Sandy Bay; also every Friday at the Benevolent Society. He compiled his statistics carefully, asking that all medical practitioners in the island forward a return of their private vaccinations every quarter; in this he was disappointed as twenty-six failed to do so in the first quarter. At his instigation each vaccinator was issued a printed copy of "Instructions for Public Vaccinators" which were also published in the Gazette. Also, from January 1, 1864, every person registering a birth was given a printed slip of the Act requiring vaccination before the age of six months, a practice commonly adopted in England.

On December 7, the Advertiser described the arrangements as thorough and as complete as they well could be and praised the cooperation of the medical profession throughout the island, and, the paper concluded, it would be difficult to find a more earnest, zealous and abler Superintendent of Vaccinations than the gentleman they have appointed.

Each quarter, Hall reported to the Colonial Secretary, carefully gauging the results of the voluntary scheme. After eleven months in operation, the House of Assembly declined to sanction the temporary appointments of public vaccinators in country districts after September 30, 1864, though approving their continuance in Hobarton and Launceston.

¹² Mercury, August 12, 1864.

On March 1, 1865, Hall analysed the figures: from November 2, 1863, to September 30, 1864, 6,846 persons were vaccinated. The registered births in all Tasmania during 1864 were 3,031. Of these infants under six months old, only 338 were vaccinated, all the rest of the 4,017 children vaccinated being above the age before which the operation must be carried out.

Here, as in England, and elsewhere, the facts prove that voluntary action cannot be depended upon.

The steps taken by the Government were good in protecting large numbers of children long neglected by their parents, but to prevent the recurrence of such neglect, much more efficient measures must be enforced and the present act amended so as to compel every child to be vaccinated before it attained the age of six months. He then directed the attention of the Government to the "Sixth Report of the Medical Officer to the Privy Council, 1863", in which Simon traced the frequency of epidemic smallpox and its great fatality in London to the neglect and postponement of vaccination, and to the imperfection and insufficiency of its performance. As there were 838 births registered in the Hobarton Registration District in 1864, and 461 in Launceston, he stressed the need in each city for one permanent vaccination station to ensure an ample supply of good, reliable lymph and the correct performance of the operation.

In Tasmania, as in England all persons, medical men, clergymen, amateurs, druggists, old women, midwives etc. are allowed to vaccinate in any way he or she may think proper and the persons operated upon are considered to have been vaccinated, and when such persons are attacked with smallpox and die, the blame is given to the remedy, and not to its imperfect administration.

This opinion was confirmed by the Report of the Smallpox and Vaccination Committee of the Epidemiological Society, April 16, 1864, transmitted to him by the President. He, therefore, called upon the Government to repeal the old act of 1853 and bring in a new Bill based on the highly successful Compulsory Vaccination Act for Scotland, 1863, which embraced all the points he had mentioned, and was generally commended by the medical profession.¹³ Whyte, whom Hall described on July 28, 1873, in glowing terms as "so well known for his zeal and knowledge on this subject",¹⁴ agreed. On July 19, 1865, he introduced into the Legislative Council Bill No. 18 "to extend and make compulsory the practice of

¹³ H.A.P., 1866/7.

¹⁴ Mercury, July 29, 1873.

Vaccination in Tasmania", later referred to by Milroy as Hall's Bill,¹⁵ which was based, as far as it could be applied to Tasmania, on the Scotch Act that made it penal to receive children into schools and servants into families if they were not vaccinated. After its second reading in the Council on August 7, the bill was attacked violently by the Mercury, now extremely Anti-Whyte in its sympathies and destructive in its criticism; it declared the alarm in 1863 was groundless, and there was no need for the Vaccination Bill which was "an elaborate piece of cumbrous machinery spread over twenty-eight draggling, ponderous clauses"; moreover, it repeated its accusation that the Whyte Government was bringing in the Bill to provide berths for mere hangers-on who had no claim to consideration.

Berths were wanted in the first place for one of their medical friends in Hobart Town, and another in Launceston, and for these two gentlemen they have placed the sum of £300 on the estimates. They must now appoint public vaccinators in every district in the colony and pay these 5/- for every certified case - the cost would be £600 to £700 a year.¹⁶

The paper contended that nothing more was required than a simple enactment by which the General Hospitals at Hobart Town, Launceston and Campbell Town could do all that was necessary. On August 21 it repeated that the Bill was intended to legalize the perpetration of a monstrous job, and described Hall's Vaccination Report for 1864 as

abounding with extracts from fancy reports of fancy boards and fancy societies.¹⁷

Its opinion was upheld by a private letter signed "Citizen": in 1864, £1,062.1.8 was paid to the Medical Profession from general revenue for gratuitous vaccination; in Hobart's population of 20,000 there were too many doctors being supported by the public purse: Turnley at the Hobart Hospital; Benson, Port Officer; Coverdale, the Orphan School; and Hall, the Vaccination Officer.¹⁸ Although the Vaccination Bill passed the Legislative Council, on September 8, 1865, much to Hall's disappointment, it was rejected by the House of Assembly by nine votes to eight.

The Whyte Government's Parliamentary Estimates provided for Hall's and Maddox's appointments as Public Vaccinators to the end of the year 1866. In his report for 1865 Hall noted that, owing to the want of

¹⁵ Hall Papers - Letter from Milroy to Hall, March 29, 1866.

¹⁶ Mercury, August 5, 1865.

¹⁷ Mercury, August 21, 1865.

¹⁸ Mercury, September 4, 1865.

an efficient Vaccination Act and in the absence of any recent alarm of the possible invasion of smallpox, parents had returned to the old state of apathy and neglect, in spite of the weekly opportunities gratuitously afforded by the public vaccinators: of the 3,069 children born in Tasmania in 1865, a total of 67 public and private vaccinations of infants under six months old had been recorded. The Public had now become so much remiss that it was found difficult to keep up a regular supply of fresh lymph throughout the island. Nevertheless, he continued to press upon the Government the need for legislative action:

Should smallpox hereafter visit the island - and it is at the present time very prevalent in the Cape Colony - the terrible array of death, the suffering and sorrow and bereavements produced in numerous families of all classes that must result should no efficient Vaccination Act be speedily provided will sit heavily on the consciences of all those, who, either by opposition, neglect or indifference stay the timely prevention that it is so patent can be obtained by legislative enactment supplemented by executive enforcement.¹⁹

On April 3, 1866, Hall's article "Vaccination in Tasmania", which he forwarded to Milroy together with copies of his "Health Reports" for 1863-64 and his Vaccination Bill, was read before the Epidemiological Society in London, and an abstract of it subsequently published in Volume Two of its Transactions. To a sympathetic English medical audience he recounted the history of Vaccination in Tasmania and his many difficulties in trying to induce the Legislature to pass an efficient Vaccination Act; though he did not despair of success, and would continue to repeat his warnings at every opportunity, he feared that nothing more would be done until the disease was actually present amongst them.²⁰

Owing to the desire of the new Ministry under Sir Richard Dry for retrenchment, Hall's services as Public Vaccinator were dispensed with after January 31, 1867. In future, the duty devolved upon the Resident Surgeon at the Hospital, vaccinating every Friday at 10.30 a.m. The figures in Hall's last report were interesting:

in 1864	3,786 children were vaccinated, more than 9/10ths of these being considerably above the age of six months.
in 1865	public vaccinations fell to 257.
in 1866	owing to a scare in Victoria, they amounted to 519.

¹⁹ H.A.P. 1866/7.

²⁰ "Vaccination in Tasmania", Transactions of the Epidemiological Society, Vol. II, 1867, p. 293-294.

From November 1, 1863 to January 31, 1867, public vaccinations amounted to nearly 7,000 children.

During these three and one quarter years, there were about 10,000 registered births, and not more than 1,000 of them were vaccinated, either publicly or privately, before attaining the age of six months, as the existing law required. Hall, therefore, concluded that a return to the previously existing provisions for vaccination would be no more successful than they had been in the past. Although many more persons than before had been operated upon, Hall's effort, for the most part, was wasted.²¹

Disappointed, but not defeated, Hall returned to his private medical practice. However, the Vaccination Episode was by no means finished. On February 8, 1869, the Mercury published the reports of the proceedings of the Melbourne Central Board of Health and of the Victorian Medical Association resulting from the introduction into and alarming spread of smallpox in Victoria. Although it had viciously obstructed Hall's efforts in 1865, the paper now called upon the Government to take stringent measures to prevent the spread of the disease to Tasmania. On the same day Smart advertised that he would vaccinate twice weekly on Mondays and Thursdays in addition to the gratuitous vaccinations every Friday at the Hospital; this the Mercury considered not enough.

Once more, as in 1863 and 1866, panic prevailed: the Tasmanian Times complained that there was no provision made in country districts for the gratuitous vaccination of the children of paupers; on April 10, Turnley was despatched urgently to investigate a suspicious case at Torquay; fortunately it was only chicken pox; circulars were sent out to all medicos asking them to persuade people to be vaccinated; Government notices were put up in public buildings; vaccination at the Hospital was stepped up to twice weekly; there was a shortage of lymph. Disgustedly, the Tasmanian Times blamed Dry's Government for its "paltry and culpable economy" in spite of Whyte's severe censure against taking such risks.

We are still more strongly of the opinion that the Government acted with ill-judging and criminal deference to a momentary clamour for retrenchment when they blotted out of the estimates the paltry sum of £300 a year for a couple of official vaccinators.²²

²¹ H.A.P. 1867/19.

²² Tasmanian Times, Feb. 12, 1869.

On March 11, 1869, Hall disclosed that thirteen medical practitioners scattered all over the island had written to him to complain of the unvaccinated state of the children in their districts, to censure the apathy and inaction of the Government, and to request supplies of vaccine lymph; others had written to Smart. In reply to the many questions with which he was besieged, he wrote five long articles to the Mercury between February 8 and March 30, 1869, in which he discussed the need for perfect vaccination, the merits of revaccination, the likelihood of contagion and so on, calling upon his wide knowledge of vaccination policies and procedures in England and Europe to substantiate his remarks. These letters revealed that he had lost none of his enthusiasm for medical science and his generosity in disseminating it to others, nor his sensitive, unselfish concern for the public welfare, in spite of the passage of the years.²³

Fortunately, the Victorian authorities were able to contain the disease at a considerable cost; consequently the Tasmanian Government and the people lapsed back once more into a state of indifference and apathy. Hall's fears, however, were not allayed; the large numbers of unprotected children, the unreliable character of the performance of vaccination, the failure of the Tasmanian Parliament to enact legislature similar to the English Act of 1867 - all these things alarmed him immeasurably; nor were his fears unfounded. On April 28 and May 28, 1869, he complained directly to the Colonial Secretary that the Clerk of the Municipal Council of Brighton and Returning Officer of the Electoral District of Jordan and Brighton, in short, a public officer, by name of Haskell, who had no medical training, was vaccinating children extensively in his district for a fee, contrary to all the recognized regulations overseas. As there was no law prohibiting such an action in Tasmania, Hall's complaint was eventually discreetly ignored.²⁴

On September 7, 1869, he tried once more to arouse Parliament to a sense of responsibility and action by petitioning the House of Assembly, entirely on his own, to pass an "Amended Compulsory Act" based on those which had achieved such satisfactory results in Ireland and Scotland.²⁵ The Lancet on January 15, 1870, wholeheartedly approved, describing the

²³ Mercury, Feb. 10, March 6, 13, 20 & 30, 1869.

²⁴ CSD 7/27/252.

²⁵ H.A.P. 1869/70.

Petition as "very sensible", the discussion that followed its presentation as very "creditable", and Whyte's opening speech as "worthy of the House of Commons". The periodical, however, advised against being too fastidious about properly educated vaccinators.

The principles of good vaccination are now condensed into one or two points such as the following:- choose a healthy child, vaccinate from arm to arm or at any rate with recent moist lymph, and make four distinct insertions of lymph. Any properly educated medical man is quite competent to carry out these principles, and it is not good policy, especially in a colony, to create a class of experts over a matter so simple. One good inspector will make the whole profession in Tasmania efficient vaccinators.²⁶

As Hall publicly denied on October 2, 1869, that the certificates for competency in vaccination which were given by Crowther to certain students at the Hospital Medical School had any value in ensuring their employment as public vaccinators judged by English standards,²⁷ the Lancet's opinion revealed a new, modified, relaxed attitude at variance with Hall's, proving that he laboured under immense difficulties in attempting to keep abreast of scientific and medical developments in Britain. Although his "Petition" was well received and an address to the Governor embodying the main points carried by the House, nothing came of it. At the next session in September 1870, he tried again, still on his own, this time in the Legislative Council, insisting that, since the panic in the early part of 1869 had died away, vaccination, either by public provision or by private Medical Practitioners, had almost ceased, not a single vaccination having been performed at the Hobarton, Launceston and Campbell Town hospitals since July 1, 1869; moreover, as far as he knew, only a single one had been performed by a private practitioner in the whole colony; consequently, vaccine lymph was practically unprocurable; in addition, since July 1, 1869, the population of 27,000 unvaccinated persons in the island had been increased by at least 3,000 more children, so that at least one-third of the population was unprepared against smallpox; of all the adjacent colonies, Tasmania alone did not employ paid public vaccinators.²⁸

However, his warning was disregarded. On May 1, 1871, and July 27, 1872, he repeated it in long articles to the Mercury, in which he

²⁶ Lancet, 1870, Vol. 1, p. 98.

²⁷ Mercury, Oct. 4, 1869.

²⁸ L.C.J., 1870/48.

reiterated his appeal to the Government to take action before it was too late, and advised it of the latest moves in smallpox prevention in the other Australian colonies and overseas. Each year, his disappointment, cynicism and anger at the irresponsibility and ineptitude of the Tasmanian Government grew. On May 1, 1871, he wrote:

Contrast the costly and vigorous steps taken to erradicate the 'scab' from the sheep in Tasmania, with the withdrawal of all pecuniary assistance towards protecting the human inhabitants of the colony from the danger of smallpox, and the utterly inefficient measures adopted to maintain a constant supply of fresh vaccine lymph.²⁹

At last, in June 1873, after eight years of persistent appeals to the Legislature by Hall, Attorney General W.R. Giblin introduced into the House of Assembly the draft of a Bill to amend the long-proved useless Compulsory Vaccination Act of 1853. Its introduction, after so long, was greeted with satisfaction by most medical practitioners, some of whom, however, namely Hall, Agnew, Smart, Edwards, Bright and Carns, pointed out by "Petition to Parliament" alterations which should be made in Committee to make the measure an efficient one for the perfect protection of the community.³⁰ Hall, in fact, was surprised during the debates at the paucity of knowledge on the subject displayed by most members of the House, and at their objections. On July 29, 1873, he examined these in the Mercury, proving that more than 40,000 of Tasmania's population were unvaccinated, and restating his conviction that he could not conscientiously advocate anything less than a complete provision for the protection of the present as well as the future inhabitants of the island.

Nonetheless, he was disappointed once again; there was a change of Ministry and the Bill lapsed. Undaunted, in the recess of Parliament intervening before its sittings in 1874, he sought an interview with Giblin to bring the subject once more to his attention, and lent him several books of the latest and highest authority. As it had been asserted in Parliament that any scheme of vaccination would cost several thousands of pounds per annum, Hall presented Giblin with an "elaborate and carefully calculated scheme" which showed that all the children annually born in the island could be vaccinated, and a constant supply of carefully selected vaccine lymph maintained for a cost not exceeding one thousand pounds. On his next interview with Giblin, many weeks later, he was referred to

²⁹ Mercury, May 2, 1871.

³⁰ H.A.P. 1873/78.

the Premier, A. Kennerley, and the Colonial Secretary, Chapman, from whom he afterwards understood that Giblin had instructions to prepare a Bill to make an efficient provision for the regular vaccination of the people. To assist in this task, Hall left all his documents in the Attorney General's office, besides offering his own personal assistance. On August 17, 1875, he wrote rather bitterly,

My delusion that the subject would be brought before Parliament, was not dispelled until the session was fast drawing to a close. When I sought for the return of the documents, which the Attorney General had received many months previously, I could only, after many applications and long delay, get one book. Some of the documents can never be replaced, others would cost me money or labour, which, at my time of life, I cannot afford. My long series of that most valuable periodical, the Lancet is now imperfect, and would bring little more by sale than the price of waste paper. This year there are no signs that the Government will take any steps to protect the people by efficient vaccination from the dangers of smallpox.³¹

He advised heads of families to combine and agitate and force action on an apathetic Government and reluctant legislators. The Medical Profession, he concluded sadly, had done more than its duty, and must now leave all the responsibility of the evils that may arise on those who ought to have worked and had not.

³¹ Mercury, Aug. 19, 1875.

CHAPTER 21

PHILANTHROPY

At a meeting in the Alliance rooms in Hobart Town on August 24, 1863, chaired by Sir Richard Dry, to raise subscriptions towards alleviating distress in Ireland, Hall advocated the cause they had gathered together to promote as "a cosmopolitan and Christian", as "one who felt it his bounden duty to relieve every human being suffering distress, regardless alike of country or of creed".¹ In past years his words would have met with some scepticism, even derision; now, they were accepted as a statement of fact by a sincere man who worked hard at great personal cost to put his beliefs into practice.

This notable change in attitude on the part of his audience was due, not so much to his efforts in Vaccination, Public Health, National Progress and the like, which were not always understood anyway, but to his philanthropic work in the newly-formed Hobart Town Benevolent Society where his generosity, kindness and selfless concern for the welfare of others were appreciated and correctly appraised. This Society, a voluntary organization of private citizens, under the patronage of the Governor, Sir H.F. Young, and the presidency of the Mayor, H. Cook, was founded on August 28, 1859, at a meeting convened by Archdeacon Davies, assisted by A. Kennerley, J.R. Bateman, R.A. Mather, E.S. Hall, T.J. Crouch, B.T. Solly and W. Tarleton, its objective being

to relieve the poor, the distressed and the afflicted and, thereby, to discountenance as much as possible mendicancy and vagrancy and to encourage industry among the indigent, irrespective of religious creed or denomination.²

From the commencement of its operations in 1860 until the granting of some charitable relief by the Government in 1866, it was the only source of assistance to the needy in the city and nearby country areas. To accomplish its objectives a fund of £500 was set up, and a maximum annual

¹ Mercury, August 25, 1863.

² Mercury, April 23, 1862.

subsidy of £800 granted by the Government, provided an equal amount was raised in voluntary subscriptions; assistance was given mainly in food, clothing, fuel and other necessities of life, great care being taken by the officers of the society to investigate every application for relief in order to prevent imposition on its funds. Formed to meet a desperate need in the community the Society quickly won support and respect for its work.

Right from the start, Hall was prominent in the charity's management; on November 18, 1859, he was elected to a General Committee of twenty-four laymen responsible for conducting the business; at its first quarterly meeting on January 9, 1860, he set the seal of liberalism on its deliberations by proposing and carrying a resolution that the press be freely admitted to general and executive meetings; he was also elected to an Executive Committee of not more than seven members whose duty it was to meet once a week, or oftener, to grant relief. At the beginning of 1861 he was elected its Chairman, a position of responsibility and influence which he held by annual election, with only a small break in 1868, for almost twenty years.

Actually, the founding of the Benevolent Society was an event of major importance in Hall's life: not only did it open up an acceptable avenue of expression for his philanthropic ideals, but it also offered accredited means by which he could work for social reform, whilst at the same time ensuring him some personal success, prestige and gratification; in return he gave the Society dedicated service until the end of his life: briefly, he compiled its statistics, wrote annual reports to Parliament and many voluminous communications to the Executive Government, led deputations, including those to a succession of Governors successfully seeking their patronage, kept a watchful eye on its depot and soup kitchen and, last but by no means least, frequently visited the sick and destitute and interviewed applicants for relief. At a meeting of the General Committee on July 14, 1862, Kennerley, Member of Parliament and the present Mayor, spoke of Hall's service to the Society.

The Society had received the greatest possible assistance from Dr Hall and next to their financial assistant (a paid employee E.H.) he had been the great worker in the Society. If any fault was to be found with Dr Hall, it was this, he was too liberal - he was for giving more rations than they thought they could afford. A more liberal, more generous, or a more kinder-hearted man than Dr Hall never breathed.³

³ Mercury, July 15, 1862.

Under Hall's leadership, the Benevolent Society quickly moved into the area of social welfare, determined to bring before the notice of the Public, and especially the Parliament, the worst social evils undermining the strength and stability of the community. On March 4, 1863, Hall requested the Colonial Secretary to take measures to prevent parents from deserting their children so that they might get them into the Orphan Asylum, and husbands from leaving the colony without making provision for the support of their families; this led to the passing of the "Deserted Wives and Families Act of 1863" under the provisions of which New Zealand volunteers were also brought. Again, on May 15 of the same year, he urged upon the Government the need for a lying-in hospital for unmarried women, as a result of which satisfactory financial arrangements were made with the Society for the care of these cases.⁴ An even greater problem vexing the city was the large number of vagrant and neglected children who roamed the streets, "street Arabs", they were called. The situation of the girls was particularly acute: if convicted of an offence, they were sent to the prison at the Cascades where they came into contact with hardened criminals, with little hope of any improvement in their demoralisation. So great was this nuisance that on August 20, 1861, a petition carrying the signatures of 835 citizens was presented to the House of Assembly requesting the establishment of Industrial and Reformatory Schools.⁵ As nothing was done, the Benevolent Society took up the matter, petitioning Parliament along the same lines on July 24, 1862, and once more before the session in 1864.⁶ In spite of persistent effort to induce the Legislature to take steps to remedy this evil, the Society's report for 1866 declared:

- No public measures have been taken to rescue the vagrant and neglected children on whose behalf we have so earnestly pleaded in every annual report. Greatly has this evil increased during the last twelve months, and the idle, vicious and unruly conduct of great masses of the children and youths in Hobart is a matter of the deepest sorrow and apprehension to every reflecting citizen.⁷

Of all the cases seeking charitable assistance, none distressed Hall more than the ill-treatment of children apprenticed out from the Orphan Asylum; for instance, in one case, a girl for three weeks was never allowed

⁴ CSD 4/39/500, 4/43/B578.

⁵ H.A.P. 1861/22.

⁶ H.A.P. 1862/19; L.C.J. 1863 S2/31.

⁷ H.A.P. 1867/15.

anything to eat but pig potatoes, not even a cup of tea or a slice of bread, and was sent alone into the bush to hunt for bullocks. In fact, so many girls, maltreated and ruined, appealed to the Society for support of themselves and offspring, that the Executive Committee brought the matter to the notice of the Government in October 1865, urging the appointment of a responsible person to visit all children apprenticed from the institution, or to place them under the guardianship of the clergyman of the denomination to which they belonged in the district.⁸

In its organisation, in the harmonious cooperation shown by the executive officers, in the ready relief it afforded in its own defined area of activity, the Benevolent Society was eminently successful; none the less, it was only a stop-gap, a temporary substitute for an urgently needed welfare programme at Government level, a small success story in an otherwise grim reality. Not unnaturally, therefore, Hall used his position as Executive Chairman to give him credit and credence in the wider sphere of his other charitable work at this time. Even if he had wished to do so, the conditions and circumstances of the years 1863-75 did not allow him to restrict his work to the Benevolent Society if his conscience were to remain clear. There was so much confusion and uncertainty, so much to be done. The first ten to twenty years of the New Colonial Society were not easy: parliamentarians were inexperienced in government and insecure in office; goals and policies were not yet clearly defined; the colony was isolated from the stimulation of example; the economic situation was difficult; the colonists, ordered for so long by autocratic representatives of the Imperial Government, were apathetic and lacking in drive and initiative; there were relics of the old convict system to be disposed of - large numbers of worn out, old, sick and invalid convicts and the increasing poor, a legacy from an unfortunate immigration policy - there was a lack of suitable institutions, and, above all else, a scarcity of finance with which to deal with this multiplicity of problems. As if that were not enough, there were religious differences between Catholics and Protestants to plague the community; especially the charitable institutions bequeathed by the British Government were suspect, their demands on the public revenue bitterly resented by the taxpayers.

Nowhere in this social maelstrom were all these problems more forcibly exemplified than in the Orphan Asylum which Hall regarded as his

⁸ Hall's evidence; H.A.P. 1867/38.

special interest and care. Although, as he pointed out to the Governor at the Annual Prizegiving in 1864, the health of the children was immensely improved, and the mortality rate greatly decreased, the arguments surrounding the institution and the general feeling of dissatisfaction with it gave him little comfort and hope that the better conditions for the children established by the 1859 Commission of Enquiry would be allowed to continue. In fact, his anxiety that they would not be was well founded: following the recommendation of the Charitable Commission in June 1863, management by the Board was dispensed with on December 31, 1863, and the institution put under direct Government control; again, continuous friction between the Superintendent and his subordinates resulted in a succession of officers - W. Benson who retired on July 31, 1862, A.H. Boyd, formerly head of the city police, who was in charge from August 1, 1862 to December 31, 1864, and assisted by Medical Officer T.C. Smart, and lastly Dr J. Coverdale from Richmond who was appointed from January 1, 1864. Moreover, distressing dissension between Catholics and Protestants over the management of the children culminated in a petition to Parliament and a Commission of Enquiry into the advisability of separating them into two distinct religious groups,⁹ whilst complaint about the behaviour of the children on leaving the institution was widespread. In short, the Orphan Asylum was regarded as a hotbed of intrigue and animosity and a shocking waste of the taxpayers' money.

Hall took no part in the altercation, not even signing the petition to separate the Catholics from the Protestants. Instead, he visited the Asylum frequently, thereby making himself perfectly familiar with every aspect of its organization and becoming well acquainted with Coverdale. As in past years, he was interested mainly in preserving the children's health and well-being and thought a great deal of nonsense was talked about the institution. He, therefore, watched, and hoped that "well" would be left alone.

Unfortunately, this was not to be the case. Coverdale, reasonably well-intentioned and efficient, but faced with an insistent public demand to decrease expenditure, was sorely tried to find ways and means to do so. As one method of cutting costs, he suggested to the Colonial Secretary on July 12, 1865, that a pint of pure milk per day for a child under six years of age, and three-quarters of a pint for children

⁹ H.A.P. 1865/102. H.A.P. 1865/92.

six and over, was an extravagance; instead he proposed three-quarters of a pint for the infants, and 10/16ths of a pint for the rest. By so doing, the monthly milk supply was reduced from 14,245 $\frac{1}{4}$ pints to 10,791 $\frac{1}{2}$ pints; to make up the deficiency in diet so caused, he suggested the present scale of vegetables be increased from six to eight ounces daily. He was advised to consult Hall on the proposition before making any alteration.

I am fully sensible I am touching a delicate subject, he wrote to Hall on July 21, 1865,

and therefore hope you will be merciful in any strictures you may think proper to offer on my daring.¹⁰

As his reason for reducing the milk ration he gave the fact that, since he had taken steps to have the milk delivered pure and free from the dilution from which it had previously suffered, cases of gastric derangement accompanied by vomiting had occurred, especially amongst the infants; he concluded, therefore, that a reduced ration was desirable.

Hall was anything but merciful; indeed, he was "sorely grieved" and passed a sleepless night in consequence of Coverdale's letter.

I did expect that you would joyfully have let well alone, he wrote in reply to Coverdale on July 24. His long letter in protest was anguished and condemnatory. After the "glorious" results which followed the improved dietary ordered by the 1859 Commission, and the excellent state of health in which Smart handed over the children to Coverdale, Hall considered the alteration in diet a retrograde step, contrary to the instructions issued by Nairn at the enquiry that no change was to be made in the diet, based on that of the Military School at Chelsea, without a scientific calculation as to its nutritive value, and specially no diminution in its nitrogenous element. Now, angrily chastising Coverdale for his irresponsibility and neglect of modern scientific dietetic principles, Hall launched into a long irrefutable argument on the necessity for an ample ration of milk irrespective of the cost.¹⁰ Intensely sincere and earnest in his endeavours to maintain a high standard of health in the children, he had little patience with political argument about expenditure, believing it far more "statesmanlike" to feed children properly to develop their minds and bodies and thus to prevent them from becoming weakly, diseased paupers and criminals, a burden to the state in the future.

¹⁰ H.A.P. 1867/38.

As he sought to control his angry impatience, disappointment and frustration at Coverdale's shortsighted policy, Hall demonstrated once more the enormous difference existing between the Superintendent's outdated attitude and his own, which was based on carefully and laboriously researched knowledge gleaned from every available source overseas. However, he willingly offered to lend Coverdale all the extracts on diet he had collected over the years, and to guide him to the sources of all modern improvements on the subject. The gastric derangement blamed by Coverdale he put down to the masses of indigestible sweet briar seeds eaten by the children.

Nonetheless, Hall's vigorous protest went unheeded, and Coverdale was given permission to decrease the milk ration. As Hall had foreseen, there was a marked decline in the children's health, which he immediately put down to the ill-advised reduced milk ration: in 1866, according to the annual report to Parliament, there were 48 more cases of sickness returned than in 1865, though the average daily strength had fallen from 583 to 511; fever caused the very large number of 63 cases, whilst in 1865 there were only 8, in 1864 only 1; skin diseases, so generally associated with imperfect nourishment rose from 69 in 1864, to 134 in 1865, and in 1866 to 216, whilst the total diseases treated rose from 458 in 1864, with an average daily strength of $536 \frac{1}{3}$, to 558 in 1866, the average strength being only 511.¹¹ Coverdale, however, in his annual report to Parliament in February 1867, prided himself on having reduced by devious means the cost of the Orphan School in 1865 by £868.11.4, and in 1866 by £964.1.4 $\frac{1}{2}$, a total in the two years of £1,832.12.8 $\frac{1}{2}$.¹²

Actually, the Superintendent's position was an extremely difficult one; so difficult, indeed, that Hall, in spite of his distress over the reduced milk ration, was eventually forced to come to his rescue. The incident was an interesting one which illustrated to what extent a biased press with motives of its own would go to mislead the Public by the withholding of essential facts and figures.

Notwithstanding a reduction of almost £2,000 in two years, the total cost of the Orphan Asylum, irrespective of the farm, for the year 1866 was £9,988.3.4; salaries alone amounted to £3,739.15.8, provisions to £5,622.0.7, the cost per child being £19.13.0 $\frac{1}{2}$ in 1865 and

¹¹ Mercury, August 11, 1868; H.A.P. 1866 S2/20.

¹² Mercury, Feb. 4, 1867; H.A.P. 1866 S2/20.

£19.10.11 in 1866.¹³ In its quest for a scapegoat on which to pin its demands for retrenchment, as it had done with respect to Vaccination, the Mercury, under its editor J. Allen, furiously attacked Coverdale and his figures in a long succession of leading articles in which it demanded a substantial decrease in expenditure and an immediate Commission of Enquiry into the organization of the institution. Coverdale, who could see little at fault in the Schools under present conditions, and certainly no way in which he could further cut costs without unpardonable damage to the children, attempted in his report for 1866 to justify the figures by comparing the expenditure at the Queen's Orphan Asylum with that of other kindred institutions in Australia and in England, including the Randwick Asylum in Sydney. His well-intentioned act immediately brought upon himself the ire of its Superintendent, May, formerly of the Convict Department in Tasmania and an adversary of Hall's in the convict dispute in 1855. Possibly old sores were being aroused; whether true or not, May, in a communication on April 29, 1867, to the Mercury which upheld his case for reasons of its own, compared the cost per head of the two institutions in detail, refuting the figures given by Coverdale.

In 1865	Q. Asylum Hobart	£19.13.0 ¹ / ₂	Randwick	£14.0.0
In 1866	Q. Asylum Hobart	£19.10.11	Randwick	£15.16.9
a difference in favour of Randwick of				
	in 1865	£5.13.0 ¹ / ₂		
	in 1866	£4.4.2		

Moreover, he accused Coverdale of discourtesy, unprofessionalism and distortion of fact. Nonplussed, Coverdale, who was described by the TasmanianTimes as "certainly not happy with his pen",¹⁴ wrote a short, ineffective letter in disagreement which did little to stem the tide of highly critical condemnation of his own management and the laudations showered, especially by the Mercury, on May.

Hall, for his part, no matter what he thought about Coverdale's knowledge of dietetics, was unable to stand by and see an injustice of this kind done, especially when he was fully acquainted statistically with the facts. He, therefore, inserted in his Health Report to the Royal Society for May 1867, a comparison of the mortality rates between the two institutions to enable the expenditure of each to be judged in accordance with the effects on the death rate, the only real standard of comparison. When his report was read by the Secretary of the Royal Society, some

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Tasmanian Times, August 8, 1867.

exception was taken to the wording of his remarks, and on the motion of M. Allport, seconded by J. Davies, the proprietor of the Mercury, the paper was referred to the Council of the Society, previous to its adoption and publication. Afterwards, Hall was surprised to see an unauthorized and incorrect notice of the matter in the Mercury, though newspaper reporters were not permitted to attend and report the proceedings at the monthly meetings; moreover, the same paragraph was copied into the Sydney Morning Herald; Hall was subsequently courteously requested by the Council to modify his remarks without suppressing the statistical facts. This he did, and the amended report was adopted and forwarded on May 9 as usual to the Mercury, which, however, did not publish it until May 29 and then in a mutilated form by omitting a section of Hall's remarks on measles.

The Mercury's deliberate intention to mislead the Public by withholding some of the facts was specially significant in that it occurred at a time when a Commission of Enquiry into the Orphan School was just beginning. Set up by the Government on May 22, 1867, to report upon the condition of the institution, and to ascertain what changes, if any, could be introduced to reduce the expenditure and to increase its practical value as a Training School, the Commission sat for thirty-one days, hearing the evidence of thirty people. The Commissioners were J.W. Gleadow from whom the enquiry took its name, J.M. Wilson, G. Salier, H. Hunter and H. Cook. Although Hall's request to the Colonial Secretary, Dry, on April 16, that he be appointed as one of the Commissioners was refused,¹⁵ he was invited as Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Benevolent Society to give evidence. Interestingly enough, Allen of the Mercury also requested and was granted permission to be examined.

When it was issued, the Commission's report was a vindication of Hall's carefully compiled, detailed evidence which included not only verbal remarks, but also copies of the correspondence between himself and Coverdale concerning the milk ration in 1865, various mortality tables of the Orphan Asylum, extracts from Dr Edward Smith's Practical Dietary for Families and Schools (Hall's own copy is now in the Crowther Collection, Hobart) plus remarks on the three dietary scales suggested by Coverdale, the Head Schoolmaster, G. Roberts, and himself respectively. Apart from his concentration on diet, Hall called for an increase, rather than a

¹⁵ CSD 4/102/1208.

decrease in staff, better supervision of the dormitories at night to prevent cruelty and bullying of the younger, weaker children, and for much greater supervision of those apprenticed out from the Asylum. Contrary to commonly held opinion, he considered the children equally as intelligent as others of the same class, lacking neither in exercise or healthy employment. Above all else, he recommended that the diet be limited only by the appetites of the children, provided there was no waste.¹⁶

Although there was a considerable body of evidence, like Allen's, opposed to Hall's, the Gleadow Commission understood and appreciated his viewpoint.

We were quite aware of the financial position of the colony and of the necessity for the utmost economy, and, therefore, not inclined to sanction anything like lavish or unnecessary expenditure, however desirable the object to be obtained - but as the natural result of our being brought into contact with such a number of young children ... our sympathies were drawn towards them ... and our most anxious care became not how cheaply the children could be maintained ... but rather to place the establishment on such a footing with proper regard to economy as could embrace ample provision for their wants, and for their moral, religious and industrial training and secular instruction ... if not, all money spent was squandered.¹⁷

This, after all, in effect was exactly what Hall wrote to Coverdale in 1865. With respect to the diet, the Commissioners openly acknowledged the influence of Hall's evidence on their decision, namely, that the allowance of food was not too great, especially the milk ration set down by the 1859 Commission.

Freed from his anxious care to re-establish the diet scale, Hall turned once more to the unresolved conflict between Coverdale and May over the costs of their respective institutions, and to the suppression by the Mercury of part of his Health Report for May 1867 pertaining to it. On August 3, he sought the assistance of a comparatively new publication in Hobart Town, The Tasmanian Times, which printed his long article on August 6. Here, he repeated the section which the Mercury had deliberately suppressed; needless to say, it disclosed facts very unpalatable to the Randwick Superintendent and to the Mercury's approval and sponsorship of him: the mortality statistics of the Randwick Asylum which Hall gave

¹⁶ H.A.P. 1867/38.

¹⁷ Ibid.

were appalling - 500 cases of measles were stated to have occurred in the first months of 1867; in March there were 27 deaths, in April 35, in May 6, altogether 68 deaths in three months, 75 deaths all told in the first six months ended June 30, being more than one ninth of all the children in the establishment.

I have a return of the dates, ages and causes of death of 72 of the number. Every medical practitioner I have shown it to regards it with horror. No sanitarian can doubt what the physical condition of these children must have been to have produced such a terrific mortality.

In comparison there were 267 cases of measles at the Queen's Asylum in Hobart Town in 1867, without a single death, though some of the cases were very severe; in a previous epidemic of measles in 1861 and 1854, the deaths were respectively 13 and 27, indicating very precisely the improvements in sanitary science; in the last two years there had not been a single death and in the last five and a half years only 7, a death rate of 3 per 1000.

This marvellous improvement in the children of the Queen's Asylum owing to the improvement in dietary and other sanitary measures is without parallel in any similar establishment.

With biting words he upbraided the Mercury for unwarrantable and unfair conduct, detrimental to the best interest of the colony by withholding facts important to the hygienic superiority of Tasmania under proper sanitary care. If Hall's impressive statistical figures were not enough to justify Coverdale's position, and to condemn May's, certainly his parting shot was memorable:

The one short visit in company with ladies to the Queen's Asylum and his presence at the Annual Distribution of Prizes last year did not, I imagine, fit the Editor of the Mercury to write so dictatorially and dogmatically on the management of the Queen's Asylum ... Hearsay tales of the three black crows kind do not afford very instructive lessons for the management of such important institutions.

The Tasmanian Times obviously agreed:

It is, of course, easy to practise economy if the result is to be not a child but a corpse.¹⁸

For all that, Coverdale's thinly-disguised attempts to placate the Parliament and the Public and to win approval for his management at the Orphan Asylum by reducing expenditure, remained a continual source of anxiety to Hall, forcing him in August 1868 to protest to the

¹⁸ The Tasmanian Times, Aug. 8, 1867.

Colonial Secretary and to warn the Public on August 11 that the children were once again being deprived of their milk by the Government's action to defeat a combination of contractors who were extorting an undue price for milk required at other public institutions. Although the Asylum farm in 1867 supplied only 120,913 $1\frac{1}{2}$ pints from about thirty cows, an amount 5,000 pints less than the children were entitled to have by the ration scale adopted by the Royal Commission in 1859 and confirmed by the Gleadow Commission in 1867, milk was now being supplied also to the General Hospital, the Cascades and the Brickfields, with the result that the children were being deprived of about 33% of their previous allowance, with no other article of nutriment being supplied as a substitute for the reduction. What was promised to be a temporary measure to defeat extortion had become a permanent practice; even the reduced allowance was frequently not all supplied, and its quality often diluted by water. Alone of all the citizens in Hobart Town, he pleaded with the Parliament and the Public not to tolerate such wantonly cruel economy.¹⁹

Again, in the Mercury on April 19, 1871, he argued strongly against Coverdale's suggestion that twice the number of children at present in the Asylum could be accommodated, if the Government wished to increase indoor-relief to the children of the poor. He insisted that one ward now contained sixty-nine beds, in four rows, so close together that they almost touched one another at the sides with the result that the occupants scarcely had one half the breathing space of five hundred cubic feet recommended by Boards of 1859 and 1867. Eventually, this rather heated dispute between Coverdale and Hall over space and ventilation in the Orphan School was referred for a decision to the Builder which decided in favour of Hall's contentions.²⁰

By early 1871 Hall was feeling thoroughly disillusioned at the turn of events in Hobart Town: large numbers of vagrant, neglected children were still roaming the streets; the "Deserted Wives and Families Act", and the "Compulsory Education Act" were not being put into force; out-door relief to the poor was increasing, though there was no sign of any improvement in their physical and moral state, and there was still no adequate supervision and protection of apprentices from the Asylum. Furthermore, after struggling for so many years to improve the condition

¹⁹ Mercury, Aug. 11, 1868.

²⁰ Mercury April 19, 1871; April 24, 1871; Nov. 27, 1871.

of the children in the Asylum he found it most disheartening that, after eleven years of colonial management, one individual, like Coverdale, inexperienced and professedly ignorant of sanitary science, could defy the decisions of a Board of Management and two whole Commissions of Enquiry. More than that, he questioned the very principle of a Board of Enquiry, considering it labour thrown away for commissioners to spend months in obtaining evidence, only to have their recommendations ignored, or overruled in the interests of economy; moreover, commissions in themselves were suspect, since the many erroneous and mischievous statements given to them as evidence could not be reported by the press, and consequently corrected or denied until it was too late, after they had already been incorporated into the report.²¹

Yet, apart from the influence he exerted in the Benevolent Society, Hall's only weapons of attack against social injustice were his letters to the press and his evidence to Commissions. Disillusioned though he was at the apparent ineffectiveness of the Boards, he, nevertheless, did not hesitate to participate when invited to do so as a representative of the Benevolent Society at yet another Charitable Commission which was appointed by the Government on April 11, 1871, to inquire into several of its institutions and into the system by which its out-door relief was administered.

This Commission, composed of T.M. Innes, J. Aikenhead, A. Douglas, A. Kennerley, D. Lewis, J.R. Scott and J. Whyte was the fourth and last before which Hall appeared. His mature and considered statement, the result of many years' experience as a doctor, a welfare worker and a social reformer, was a significant analysis of the fundamental social issues requiring solution after eleven years of colonial management; by inference, it revealed, too, where he himself had failed to achieve the results for which he hoped. In his opinion drunkenness, immorality and the desertion of families were still the three cardinal sins of the city; to prevent the worst features of these, he suggested that more indoor relief, rather than outdoor relief be given, as it was impossible to get the children of the recipients into schools and out of their evil ways. Much of his evidence was concerned with the inadequate guardianship and supervision of apprentices. In a long and eloquent plea for the better protection of the helpless children sent out from the institution at the

²¹ Mercury, April 19, 1871.

age of twelve to face a grim and often hostile world, he told the Commissioners:

I called it 'white slavery' at the annual meeting of the Benevolent Society but a master or mistress under the slave system had to pay a good price for a bond servant, and self-interest alone would be a strong motive to give such good treatment as would preserve health and life. no such motive need weigh with the masters or mistresses of apprentices from the Queen's Asylum, for if the boys or girls die, or get crippled or disabled from neglect or maltreatment it costs the employers nothing to obtain another apprentice from the same institution.

In an equally earnest plea on behalf of the children within the Asylum, he asked for a return to the standards in accommodation and dietary set down by the 1859 Commission.

I am told that when these dormitories are entered in the morning, after twelve hours or so of occupation, the air is absolutely sickening.

and again

The children are receiving a pint of warm slop, called tea, night and morning, with dry bread the year through.

For the future, he recommended that "Dry Earth Conservancy" be used as a method of sanitation; more warmth for the children; a longer period of education, at least until fourteen years; more pleasant methods of serving food; ordinary clothing for those leaving the Asylum, and some small payment for their services as apprentices. His evidence concluded with a plea for the better treatment of the aged and invalided, especially those at the Cascades. Oddly enough, his last words to a Commission were a condemnation of the one building he most hated in Hobart Town, the Cascades prison, declaring it a

positive cruelty to make this misplaced, gloomy old prison, with all its penal associations a refuge for invalids.²²

Hall, indeed, was becoming increasingly concerned about the plight of the pauper aged and invalids housed at the Brickfields and the Cascades. As the latter building, especially, was out of sight some distance from the city and still carried the stigma of a convict prison, it was rarely visited even by the philanthropically minded. Consequently, the old and sick, through no fault of their own, were neglected and forgotten. Using the interest and opportunity created by the sittings of the Charitable Commission, as he had done once before in 1863 in his review of the Henslowe report, he wrote a series of three articles on the two

²² H.A.P. 1871/63.

institutions, which were published in the Mercury from May 20 to June 2, 1871. They were memorable, indeed; a passionate, heart-moving appeal to the citizens not to tolerate such inhumanity to man, and a terrible condemnation of the Government's parsimony and stinginess in its treatment of the aged and suffering.²³ Also, they were immediately effective: on June 3 the Mercury agreed that the Cascades, partly a prison, partly a refuge for the destitute, partly a reformatory for boys, was a disgrace and so repulsive that no question of petty economy could excuse it. When its Superintendent, R. Atkins, called for a Board of Enquiry as well, the Charitable Commission took the matter up and visited the Brickfields and Cascades as well.

On the night of October 5, 1871, sixteen years old Caravance Emma Barker, who had been apprenticed from the Queen's Orphan Asylum since the age of twelve and three-quarters years, drowned herself through sheer misery in the River Derwent. The finding of her body in the shallow water beside the river the next day shook Hobart Town with horror to the very depths of its being and confirmed all that the Benevolent Society, in its petitions to Parliament, and Hall, in his evidence to the Commission, had endeavoured to say. It also called forth another passionate letter from Hall on "White Slavery".

This victim of others' sin, neglect and cruelty was an inmate of the Queen's Asylum from the age of seven to twelve and three quarters years. She was always healthy, though spare in make and delicate looking. Never gave the slightest show of insane tendencies, timid and retiring in disposition, but so docile and well-behaved that neither matron nor schoolmistress ever had occasion to correct her. Servants of the institution bear similar testimony.

The inquest disclosed that when Barker was apprenticed out she was habitually flogged with a cane, starved and neglected until she could endure her misery no longer. Now, there was no law by which her oppressors could be punished. Hall maintained that the reason for so many of the children turning out badly was not the effect merely of their training in the Asylum, but due to the neglectful way in which they were cared for after leaving it. Once again, he stressed that Parliament was responsible for compelling the Government to adopt proper and efficient measures to protect the helpless children of the state, and for putting an end to the system of white slavery "so justly deserving of the vengeance of God".²⁴

²³ Mercury, May 23 & 27, June 2, 1871.

²⁴ Mercury, Oct. 16, 1871.

On July 4, 1873, Parliament, moved at last by the tragedy, introduced the "Queen's Asylum Bill" to ensure the better control and guardianship of wards of the state.

Hall was now sixty-eight and beginning to feel the effects of his age. Unhappily, in June 1872 he suffered some accident which deprived him of the use of his right arm, and prevented him from visiting the Orphan Asylum as much as he would have liked. Coverdale's management still caused him anxiety, and he saw little likelihood of improvement as long as he remained in charge. Nor were his fears unfounded: when he visited the institution on April 6, 1873, he found two girls undergoing a week's sentence of solitary confinement on bread and water for having been absent from the institution without leave for some hours. He was told that two other girls and some boys had suffered the same punishment during his absence. Hall was horrified at such treatment, so reminiscent of the barbarity he had struggled against in the old convict days in 1854. As the Board of Guardians had no control over the Principal, and there was no Visiting Magistrate to supervise his treatment of the children, like there was for adult criminals, Coverdale being responsible only to the Colonial Secretary, Hall protested to the Government, only to find Coverdale's actions condoned and upheld. He immediately published all his correspondence with the Colonial Secretary in the Mercury on April 25 for Parliament and the Public to judge for themselves; in his opinion, depriving growing children of the nourishment necessary to their proper physical development was an irreparable injury to the individual, and a loss to society by impairing their capacity for labour; stockbreeders, indeed, knew better than that; moreover, it was monstrous that Coverdale should have the power to punish children for offences with double the severity that the gaolers of Hobart Town could punish adult criminals.

Fortunately, public opinion was already turning against Coverdale and his management, and Hall's remonstrances no longer fell on deaf ears. Yet, Coverdale was to sow the seeds of his own destruction himself. Owing to the increase in outdoor relief to pauper parents, and to an experiment in "boarding-out" of forty-two children in selected respectable families being conducted by Tarleton, the Administrator of Public Grants, who was responsible for the placement of destitute children both in the Orphan Asylum and elsewhere, the number of children in the Asylum, by the annual report of 1872, had fallen to about three hundred and fifty, making it questionable whether the institution in its

present form should be continued as an economic proposition. In an effort to maintain the institution as it was and, consequently, his own tenure of office, Coverdale stressed to the Government the economic advantages to be had from his management of the institution. Persuaded by the Superintendent's economic arguments and his criticisms of the handling of the "boarded out" children, the Government, without any consideration of or enquiry into the welfare of the forty-two children, suggested to Tarleton that, unless special reasons existed for a larger allowance, money payments above 2/6 per week for boarded-out children should be reduced, as the Government was now in a position to offer the alternative of their maintenance and education at the Orphan Asylum.

Tarleton, who had declared his strong opposition to the mechanical, loveless-life, devoid of all softening domestic influences, forced upon the orphans, as far back as the 1867 Gleadow Enquiry, responded with a furious attack against Coverdale and the Orphan Asylum. His report to the Colonial Secretary, which was laid before Parliament and ordered to be printed, charged that twenty-nine girls from the institution were now prostitutes, the inmates were generally uncared for, starved and neglected, the institution was badly managed, and the children on leaving it useless. The Mercury agreed that the correspondence between Tarleton and the Ministry showed the latter in a weak and damaging light,

the acme of sheer incompetence to keep up with the spirit of the age, and of blindness to the signs of the times.²⁵

Hall, too, joined in the debate on the respective merits of training destitute children in the Orphan Asylum, or of boarding them out. Actually, it was the last of his numerous articles written on the children's behalf. As he had done so often before in discussions of this nature he found the amounts of money named by both parties to the dispute insufficient for the proper maintenance and education of the children in question, and, by referring to similar institutions and situations overseas, appealed for a more generous and liberal attitude. In other matters, he agreed sometimes with Tarleton, sometimes with Coverdale:

I endorse all the Administrator of charitable Grants says on the subject of false economy, exercised in the training of the children to whom the Government stands in loco parentis and the importance of a wise liberality in so providing for such children that they may have sound minds in sound bodies, and be useful, self-supporting citizens hereafter, instead of becoming permanent burdens on the community 'as invalids, paupers or criminals'.

²⁵ Mercury, July 19, 1873.

Yet he found the children gainfully enough employed in the institution, no better or worse on leaving it than other children of the same class. His words branded the apprenticeship system for all time.

The apprenticeship system has in fact, been one of cruel slavery. The children are frequently badly fed, and shamefully clothed, vilely lodged, inhumanely beaten, with no redress, no wages for any of them, no holidays like others of their own ages

Yet Hall could still see a place in the society for the institution, and suggested that the three hundred and fifty children should be divided into family groups of thirty, as in the Boys' Home and Girls' Industrial School. He did not altogether believe that Tarleton's scheme of boarding-out would be successful, as suitable homes for these children were just not available.

Nevertheless, the boarding-out system ought to be fairly tried, but on a more liberal scale of allowances, and its effects watched over by other than officials responsible for it.

His last words drove home the message he had so long struggled to impart:

Until every vestige of the convict system is expelled from the Queen's Asylum, and the sinless and blameless victims of others' crimes, neglect or indifference, be treated as we would treat our own children, as our great exemplar loved little children, the management of the institution can never accomplish its only legitimate object, or give proper satisfaction to any real Christian, or be worthy to bear the name of our philanthropic Queen.²⁶

On August 10, 1875, Hall wrote to the Mercury once again about the Orphan Asylum. This time, it was not to plead on the children's behalf, but to praise what he had seen on his last visit; Coverdale was gone, his place taken by Sandford Scott, whom Hall felt was the right man for the place; the institution was clean and orderly, surpassing anything he had previously seen; many of the improvements recommended by the Royal Commission in 1871 and long advocated by Hall, had been put into operation by Scott; the children were no longer treated as convicts, but sat down to table as civilized beings and used civilized table ware expressly made in England for the institution; the children's clothing was no longer ragged, and no longer were they sent from the institution in charity garments; the diet was ample and nutritious; not one child was confined to bed in hospital. Nonetheless, Hall felt there was still room for

²⁶ Mercury, July 22, 1873.

improvement in better methods of sanitation, better supervision of the dormitories and the payment of apprentices' services.

I have been long an unsparing censor of all that I have thought wrong in the management of this charity and I feel it to be not only a duty but an exquisite pleasure to publicly commend the improvements I have noticed.²⁷

²⁷ Mercury, Aug. 11, 1875.

CHAPTER 22

HEALTH OFFICER

On August 26, 1861, the Mercury remarked that, owing to increased population and its accumulation in great cities, Public Health was now one of the most important questions occupying the attention of statesmen and corporate authorities in civilized countries; almost every town in England and the larger cities in Australia now had a Health Officer, whose duty it was to report upon the statistics of disease and mortality, and to direct the Government's attention to the causes of unhealthiness and to the areas of disease. Hobart Town was lagging far behind other civilized communities in not having a similar officer.

Very little attention has been paid in Hobart Town to the subject of sanitary science. We bury our dead in the most populous parts of the city, Hobart Town is literally full of sepulchres. We have located our slaughter yard under our very noses. The Gas House is next door, and a soap and candle factory on the opposite side of a narrow street - the refuse of all emptying itself in common with the uncovered city drain into a shallow swamp of offal, rotting and seething in the sun, and manufacturing gaseous poison.

Five years later, on July 2, 1866, a lady visitor from Melbourne, holidaying in Hobart Town for the benefit of her health, found cause to complain in a like manner.

...In point of sanitary provisions I must say that you are far behindhand, and your street nuisances are positively abominable. Now, in Melbourne, some regard is paid to the welfare and convenience of pedestrians, but here, I declare, the obstructions and dirty impediments are shockingly disgraceful. One nuisance I would particularly point out, I allude to the hanging of fresh killed meat by some of the butchers on both sides of the footpaths, and not only the meat, but the offal, often dripping with blood I was passing along Liverpool Street the other day with a nice silk dress on, and I had to turn into the wet and muddy road to avoid having it spoilt with grease and blood. Then the filth and garbage of all kinds that are thrown into the streets in many places are an intolerable nuisance and would not be tolerated in Melbourne.¹

¹ Mercury, July 3, 1866.

However, it was not quite correct that the city had no Health Officer: although Hall held no appointment which carried a salary, and his work was of necessity limited to pointing out abuses, he, nevertheless, knowing that it was the recognized practice elsewhere and necessary for the well-being of the people, conscientiously undertook many of the duties of a Health Officer voluntarily. That he should have performed such an arduous task for so long without any recompense and very little gratitude was an indication of his own fine, persevering character, whilst, at the same time, a sad reflection on the scientific and medical outlook and the wisdom of Hobartton officials. Be that as it may, Hall compiled his Health Reports regularly, assessing, warning, and advising suitable courses of action, thus making, as the Tasmanian Times pointed out, the most valuable contribution of all to the Papers and Proceedings of the Royal Society.²

Perhaps Hall's deep concern for the welfare of his fellow citizens, young and old, was best illustrated by an opening address he gave on April 4, 1865, as the newly-elected Chairman of the Physical Section of the Royal Society. As no special subject had been selected, he chose to discuss three recent discoveries which he considered were important to the comfort and welfare of the human race: the first of these was the dissevering of the light and heat giving rays of the sun by passing the solar ray through a solution of iodine or sulphide of carbon; the second was the discovery of metal magnesium, and the third - a subject of a purely sanitary nature - the artificial feeding of infants whose mothers were unable to nurse them. In true Halleian style, he concentrated the major portion of his address on the third. As a statist, he was greatly concerned that so many children under five years of age died through mismanagement: in England, it was half the number born; even in Tasmania, where the climate was so propitious, out of 920 annual births, on the last seven years' average, 138 infants under one year old annually died; and 87 more between the ages of one and five.

It is the pride of modern science that its researches are made to have a practical application to the welfare of man. I shall not, therefore, deem it necessary to apologize for introducing so homely a subject into the discussions of the Physical Section of the Royal Society of Tasmania. Whatever tends to benefit our common humanity, and may eventuate in the saving of many lives will always hold the first place in my philosophy.

² The Tasmanian Times, Aug. 8, 1867.

He then described in detail Baron Liebig of Munich's newly discovered formula for artificially fed infants, the recipe for which was:

15 fluid ounces of skimmed cows' milk
 1 1/2 ounces by weight of wheaten flour
 22 grains of carbonate of potash

all boiled together as directed.

1 1/2 ounces of malt flour mixed in 3 ounces of water.

Add to the milk mixture when removed from the fire.

Hall's instructions were detailed and precise; his intentions were perfectly obvious.

I have prepared this artificial mother's milk and made a meal of it. It is both palatable and easily digested.³

Surely it was the first time anyone had deliberately used the Royal Society to disseminate new methods in child care to the Public.

On February 25, 1867, six years after the idea was first discussed by the Mercury, Alderman Cook again suggested the appointment of a Health Officer, as the City Council was empowered to do under the Act 21 Vic: No. 15 Sec. 3. The circumstances which led to his proposal were dramatic and extraordinary, truly a unique incident in the history of Hobart Town. On January 19, 1867, a healthy nine year old boy named Thomas Bowring was severely bitten in the underlip by a half-bred spaniel bitch, which, on that and the previous day, was unusually vicious, quarrelsome, and peculiar in its actions, biting at stones in the street, eating bits of straw and frothing at the mouth. Smart immediately dressed the wound which progressed favourably and healed within ten days. The dog died the day after it bit the boy. Bowring's health continued good until February 15 when he suddenly started up in his sleep, jumped out of bed, and screamed violently. On February 17 he was so ill and behaving so wildly and strangely that Smart, then Hall, and later four other doctors, R.W. Carns, H.W. Agnew, R.S. Bright and J. Doughty, were called in. After watching the child's strange and terrible sufferings, each doctor diagnosed "hydrophobia" for which there was no known cure at that time. Late the same day, the boy calmed and died in his mother's arms.

This frightening, horrifying attack of so terrible a disease was believed to be the first case south of the equator and certainly, the first known case in the Australasian colonies. Naturally, it shocked and galvanized the city into action: both Smart and Hall immediately

³ P.P.R.S., 1865, p. 33.

advised the Council to exterminate the thousands of useless, mischievous, unregistered dogs which roamed about the streets causing suffering and annoyance; whilst registered dogs were to be chained for fifty to sixty days and carefully watched. The Council's Health Committee immediately held an inquiry after which it published the evidence in all its distressing details in the press to appease the Public's curiosity and to prevent any misrepresentation of the facts. However, there were some people who refused to believe that hydrophobia had occurred in Hobart Town. Indeed, their conviction that a wrong diagnosis had been made was encouraged and strengthened by Crowther's public declaration that it was not hydrophobia but a case of traumatic tetanus. Since Crowther had not examined the boy himself, feelings and tempers, especially amongst the medical fraternity, ran very high. Smart and Hall, particularly, suffered suspicion and ridicule which Smart indignantly endeavoured to counteract by forwarding a complete account of the whole affair to the Australian Medical Journal.⁴ Luckily, there were no other cases: though singularly distressing, the incident did not result in the appointment of a Health Officer, however desirable it was.

From 1867 to 1875 Hall persisted with his Health Reports, occasionally contributing other small articles on statistics, climate and health as well to the press. In England, his work did not pass entirely unnoticed - in 1869 the President of the Royal College of Physicians of London honoured him as a medico-vital statistician by soliciting his views on the nomenclature of diseases preparatory to its publication by the College.⁵ More significantly in 1872 he used the data collected for his reports over a period of fifteen years to join with Abbott in the compiling of their last, most ambitious, and most important work on meteorology and medico-vital statistics. This major publication, which was printed by the Tasmanian Government for the Royal Society, comprised two sections: the first part by Abbott was, in the words of its lengthy title, The Results of Five Years' Meteorological Observations for Hobart Town with which were incorporated the results of Twenty-Five Years' Observations previously published by the Royal Society of Tasmania and completing a period of thirty years. In his introduction, Abbott pointed out that the results already published terminated in 1865; as further

⁴ Mercury, March 27, 1867.
A.M.J., June, 1867, pp. 166-182.

⁵ E.S. Hall, "Climate and Vital Statistics of Tasmania", The Results of Five Years' Meteorological Observations for Hobart Town, (Hobart Town, 1872), p. 14.

observations for the next five years had been tabulated, he thought it desirable to incorporate these with the former, in order to give in a complete form the results of the observations of thirty consecutive years, 1841-1870, incidentally the results of a life-time's work by him. The second section was an article by Hall, "Climate and Vital Statistics of Tasmania", a unique contribution to Tasmania's statistical and medical history, which Inspector-General Lawson, the President of the Epidemiological Society described "as a model for any work of the kind".⁶ Since the masses of statistics relating to population, births, deaths, marriages and diseases required a trained and experienced medical statist to adequately evaluate them, the comments of the Australian Medical Journal in its review in December 1873 best indicated the calibre of the article.

It is almost superfluous to say that Mr Hall's scientific reputation extends far beyond the colony in which, for forty years, he has laboured with honour to himself and profit to others. His various contributions to the scientific literature of the day have well attested his competency to deal with questions relating to health and disease, more especially in that broader aspect which presents them as they are seen to be affected by the remoter influences of causation. In putting forward, therefore, a series of facts bearing upon these influences, as observed in Tasmania, it may be assumed that Mr Hall's statements are of that carefully considered kind which do not suggest controversy. They are arguments of an irreputable order, so that although his object may clearly have been to show the remarkable salubrity of Tasmania as a place of residence, he is to be acquitted of all prejudice or partizanship, inasmuch as he only gives facts and makes comparisons, and does not go at all out of his way to enforce conclusions, seeing that the inferences inevitably declare themselves.⁷

Both Abbott's and Hall's figures were surprising and gratifying: indeed, Abbott's proved that the climate of Hobart Town and Tasmania generally was more insular than that of the British Isles and equitable in every particular; for example, the average mean temperature of January, the warmest month, was 62.70°, while that of July, the coldest month, was 46.1°, a range of only 16.6°; the average mean temperature of the whole year being 54.7°; in addition, the percentage of humidity varied only from 67 in January to 83 in July, the mean dewpoint from 56.5 in February to 40 in July. Hall's statistics also proved the "wonder-working influences" of the island's genial climate, namely that the total death

⁶ Mercury, Oct. 7, 1873.

⁷ A.M.J., Dec. 1873, pp. 371-372.

rate for the whole island fell from 17 $\frac{1}{2}$ per 1000 in 1857 to 14 per 1000 in 1870, the average for the years 1869-71 inclusive being 13 $\frac{1}{2}$ per 1000. Of children under five years of age the death rate in 1870 was only 29 per 1000 as compared with 67.5 in England and Wales. Overall, the death rate over the last seven years had shown a considerable decline and was far less than the acceptable normal standard of 17 per 1000. In short, Hall was very optimistic that, with better sanitary measures in the future, it would be difficult to find a place better suited to health and longevity than Tasmania.

During the next two years, the people of Hobarton relaxed in the pleasant, comforting afterglow of Hall's article, priding themselves on the fact that no epidemics had occurred since 1868. In early 1875, however, as his mortality statistics showed an increasing number of typhoid, measles, scarlet fever and diphtheria deaths, an ominous note of alarm began to creep into his Health Reports. More and more insistently he urged the need for better health and sanitary measures. In April, 1875, the deaths were 102, the greatest number ever registered for that particular month, and only once exceeded, in July 1860, in the last nineteen years. By mid-July Hall's warnings to the Council and the Government, backed by the press, were compelling enough to induce the Colonial Secretary to issue to the wardens of all municipalities a copy of that section of the Police Act of 1865 which related to the health and improvement of towns, with instructions to enforce its provisions. More important still, as far as Hall was concerned, the two authorities, acting together in consultation under powers conferred by that Act, decided at long last to appoint a Health Officer for the city of Hobart, and the neighbouring towns of New Town, Wellington and Sandy Bay and named him on November 6 as a person "well qualified to undertake these important duties".⁸

Two days later, the Mercury recognized the important part played by the Health Reports in fashioning public opinion; although it had taken a long, long time, they were at last fulfilling the purpose for which they were always intended. Advising the Council to study carefully the Report for October, which registered 55 deaths, exceeded only by the Octobers of 1857 and 1858 with 57, the Mercury, in a reversal of attitude to that shown during the Vaccination episode, wrote:

Dr Hall has for years devoted himself to the study of vital statistics and to the sanitary condition of the city and suburbs, and, in the face of much discouragement and public

⁸ CSD 10/24/361.

ingratitude, he has stuck to his subject with a determination that only professional zeal could sustain. Parliament, in a cheeseparing-fit some years ago, struck off the paltry allowance made him, and thereby also deprived him of any official position or authority, so that he could only point out evils he was powerless to remedy.⁹

Hall's appointment as City Health Officer at a salary of £100 a year was confirmed on November 15; his appointment as Officer of Health for the three neighbouring towns, also at a salary of £100 plus travelling expenses, was not approved by the Government until January 10, 1876, although he was requested to make an immediate survey of the three towns for an additional payment. These two appointments, together with the £50 he received annually for attendance on the Police Force, gave him the largest income, £250, which he had ever received. Generally they were well received; only one correspondent, "Sanitas", objected kindly that Hall's many years of meritorious service to the community deserved a retiring allowance rather than an arduous office, to which the Mercury immediately objected that his mental powers and professional capability were as great as ever, and, apart from his slight deafness, "his eye was not dim nor his natural force abated".¹⁰

Seventy-one years of age or no, Hall commenced his new duties vigorously, amidst a hub-bub of complaints from all and sundry about the unsanitary state of the city. According to the Mercury's editorial on November 15, the day he received his appointment, Hobart Town had improved sanitarily very little over the years, making his task an enormous one. His first monthly report to the Council, read on November 29, described how he tackled the difficult task of cleaning up the four towns.¹¹ From the beginning he realized that only personal contact would achieve the best results. Spending from six to nine hours daily, surely an exhausting and exacting duty for an elderly man, he visited and inspected, advised and persuaded. He told the Council:

I have good hopes that my visits and suggestions made in a private and kindly way, will, in most cases, effect the removal of the nuisances I pointed out.

Indeed, he believed that nothing short of a house to house visitation to rich and poor alike would remove the various sources of disease throughout the city.

⁹ Mercury, Nov. 8, 1875.

¹⁰ Mercury, Nov. 10, 1875.

¹¹ Mercury, Nov. 30, 1875.

Actually, this was the way in which his office developed; the Council and the Government, having made the appointment, left the rest to him. Unfortunately, his conscientious, interesting and constructive reports were discouragingly shelved, to the Mercury's disgust,¹² and he was left to rely on his own resources which, apparently, were effective to some degree and well appreciated by his fellow citizens. At a luncheon given on the occasion of an inspection of the General Hospital on June 12, 1878, Dr Butler, the Speaker of the House of Assembly, proposed the health of Dr Hall, Health Officer of the city and an invited guest, saying

that he did so very honestly, because he was quite sure that in a few years, if Dr Hall carried out his views with entire success, the medical profession would find no work to do.¹³

Of course, Hall made numerous suggestions to Parliament and to the Council: as there was no sewerage, he never ceased to recommend the introduction of some system, especially one that would not pollute the River Derwent about which he was most concerned. In the meantime, in the absence of anything better, he strongly advocated "Dry Earth Conservancy".¹⁴ The adulteration and care of food; a better milk supply; building regulations; measures to prevent infection by contagion, especially in public vehicles; the state of the rivulet; the necessity for vaccination; all these and many other topics were regularly and eloquently discussed by him; certainly, it was not for want of effort on his part that his suggestions so frequently fell on deaf ears.

Occasionally, more decisive and constructive use was made of his services beyond the city bounds. On September 11, 1876, the Superintendent of the General Hospital submitted to the Colonial Secretary a return which showed the number of diphtheria cases admitted into the Hospital since January 1, 1875, the great majority of these being from the Brighton Area, six cases from one family alone. At Butler's suggestion, Hall was directed to undertake an enquiry. It was the first of four investigations by him into the incidence of diphtheria which was now fast establishing itself as the greatest menace to the health and happiness of the Tasmanian

¹² Mercury, Dec. 4, 1875.

See Hall's Health Reports to Parliament listed in the Bibliography.

¹³ Mercury, June 13, 1878.

¹⁴ Mercury, March 16, 1877.

CSD 11/2/1760.

people - at Brighton in September 1876, at Sorell in February, 1878, at Longley in October, 1879, and at Bellerive in June, 1880. In each of these epidemics, Hall's unsparing, exhaustive enquiries were able to trace the passage of infection ultimately to the pollution of drinking water supplies, or to some form of bad sanitation in the district.¹⁵

Two events of a widely different character heartened Hall considerably. The first of these was the reorganization of a system of public vaccination against smallpox owing to several cases occurring in New South Wales. After being entirely suspended from 1868 to 1877, vaccination was recommenced in February, 1877.

The evening of May 14, 1878, was a particularly memorable occasion for him. Although his deafness prevented him from hearing all that was said, Hall attended a lecture, "Water Supply in Relation to Disease", given to the Royal Society by the Bishop of Tasmania. As the lecturer quoted from Denison's "Report on the State of Woolwich and Salisbury, 1845" and Hall's own two lectures on "Hydraulics" given to the Royal Society in 1863, the evening was full of memories. In his last public speech on "Sanitation", Hall thanked the Bishop for supporting his work as "Health Officer":

.... for when respected and intelligent gentlemen took up sanitary subjects it would have much more weight with Government and local authorities than anonymous letters in the newspapers.

As he had predicted fifteen years ago the diseases in Hobart Town most influenced by impure water supply had decreased. Sadly he expressed a wish dear to his heart:

....Could other sanitary improvements be made to effect a similar reduction in other diseases he would go to his grave satisfied that his labours in the cause had not been fruitless.¹⁶

On March 29, 1880, Hall published a very special Health Report, part of which is included here as a tribute to his great friend and co-worker, Abbott.

This month I have to deplore, for the first time in twenty-five years, the want of the elaborate and valuable Monthly Meteorological Table, compiled from the daily observations made during that long period by the

¹⁵ CSD 10/44/866, 10/58/1393, 10/75/1890, 10/76/1957, 10/79/2061, 11/2/1898.

¹⁶ The Bishop of Tasmania, "Water Supply in relation to Disease", P.P.R.S., May 1878.

indefatigable Mr Francis Abbott. The zealous and gratuitous pains taken by this well-informed scientific-observer (at no inconsiderable cost for the best instruments and publications) to supply the Government and the public, through the Royal Society (of which he has been so long an ardent member) with carefully taken meteorological facts, entitles him, at the very least, to the warmest gratitude, not only of the public of this his adopted country but of scientific meteorologists throughout the world. Honours have been conferred upon him by renowned societies both in Europe and America. Many elsewhere will hear with sorrow that the infirmities of his four score of years prevent him from continuing his inestimable contribution to meteorological and astronomical science. Tasmania has now thirty-nine years of consecutive meteorological daily records, thirty-five of which have been printed and published under the auspices of our Royal Society. In the summing, averaging and analysing these tables, the Curator of the Museum (Robbin) and myself have taken an active part.¹⁷

Since no private individual could ever again be expected to devote so much labour and expense to what was really a national interest, Hall hoped that the Government would very soon take steps to fill the gap left by Abbott. Hall's tribute to his friend was generously echoed by the Mercury which fittingly went on to speak of the partnership between the two men.

These two gentlemen have been for more than a generation joint volunteers in what ought to have been the work of state paid officers, and the graceful tribute which Dr Hall pays to the past services of Mr Abbott is creditable to them both. Almost of an age, their desire to be of use to the land of their adoption has been very much of a par. Government has too long presumed on the gratuitous services rendered and is now unprepared for what is its duty, however little unobservant and heedless people may value the aids of meteorological and sanitary science.¹⁸

Though over seventy, frail, and poorly in health ever since he was thrown from his gig whilst returning home from visiting a destitute widow and her children, Hall, nonetheless, was a very active Health Officer from 1875 to the end of 1880; as the number of measles, scarlet fever, typhoid fever and diphtheria cases were on the increase during this period, his letters to the press were even more frequent as he debated the causes of the infection and advised the Public how best to prevent and control their spread. Nor was he any less active in the Benevolent Society: on January 26, 1880, he was elected Chairman of the Executive once more

¹⁷ Mercury, March 29, 1880.

¹⁸ Ibid.

at its Twentieth Annual Meeting at which both the Mayor and Governor A.A. Weld praised his work and that of other long standing members of the Society.

During twenty years this society had done great good, and if he were put in the position of Mr Witt, or Mr Hull, or Dr Hall, Mr Mather or Mr Crouch, he should congratulate himself, for if they had done no other good in their lives they might go to their graves feeling that they had done their duty and conferred a great benefit on the colony.¹⁹

By an arrangement made with the Government on February 24, 1880, the Benevolent Society took over on March 1 the administration of outdoor relief to paupers, the care of the boarding-out of children and the admission of infirm and poor persons to the Invalid Depots. With the Government's approval, therefore, Hall resigned as Executive Chairman to become the Society's secretary and the disbursing officer of the Government's grant for charitable aid, a position which he held until his death.

By early 1881, however, it was evident that Hall's strength was failing fast: on June 2 he attended his last meeting of the Benevolent Society; two days later he published his last Health Report in the Mercury which closed its long association with him with a graceful compliment.

Our informant is our worthy Health Officer of the City of Hobart, Dr E. Swarbrick Hall, a gentleman who has for years watched the operations of the clerk of the Weather with as much diligence and pertinacity as he has regarded the state of the Public Health, with a fierce opposition to all that would be likely to prejudice the sound sanitary condition of the community, and a wise fostering and advocacy of any modern improvement the introduction of which would be likely to have a beneficial effect.²⁰

Though the finale was naturally a sorrowful one for his family and his many friends, it was also a grand one, befitting the great Tasmanian he was. On June 8, on the occasion of his Golden Wedding with his wife, Mary, though he was very weak and feeble, the Mayor and citizens of Hobart Town presented him at his home at 58 Campbell Street with an illuminated address and a purse of £142.10.0 in recognition of his public services and his private worth. In the presence of his wife, son and five daughters, Hall gave a brief resume of his life and, overcome by emotion, thanked the people of Hobart Town, saying that in all his life he had lived by the grand old English axiom

"Woe Betide, for the Right".²¹

¹⁹ Mercury, Jan. 27, 1880.

²⁰ Mercury, June 4, 1881.

²¹ Mercury, June 9, 1881. The Catholic Standard, July 1881.

Even on this wonderful day, sick though he was, he did not forget the orphan children for whom he had felt so much sympathy all his life; though he was too ill to visit them himself, he deputed his daughters to take them a gift of oranges, buns and lollies, together with a farewell letter of blessing.²²

His life slowly drew to a close; each day the Mercury issued a bulletin on his health; many were the messages of sympathy and wishes for his recovery. But such was not to be: on Saturday night, July 30, just before midnight, in the seventy-seventh year of his age, in full consciousness of unimpaired mental faculties, he died quietly sitting in his chair in the presence of his family. After a Requiem Mass at St. Joseph's Church, presided over by Bishop Murphy, he was buried at Cornelian Bay Cemetery on August 2, 1881.²³

The Obituary notice in the Mercury read:

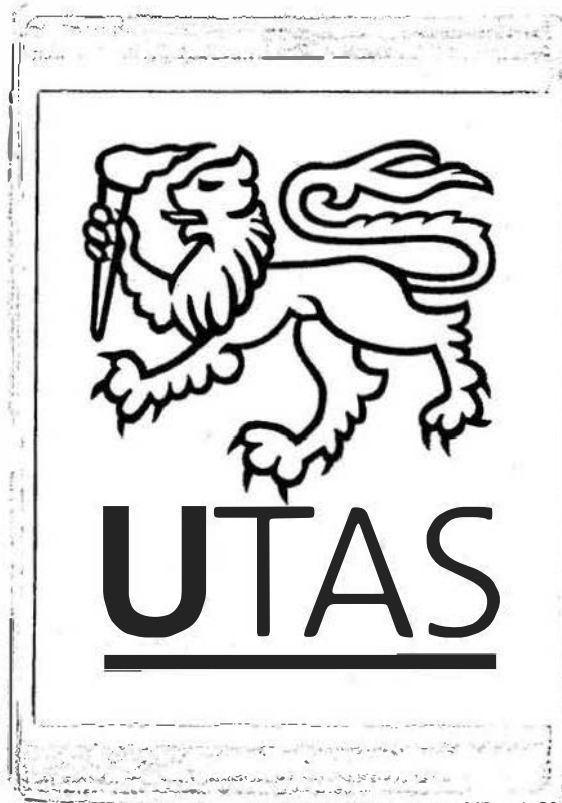
Though to his family and intimate friends the end was not unexpected, the intimation that Dr Hall died on Saturday night, shortly before midnight will be received with regret throughout the length and breadth of the colony. They who knew him best will deplore the loss of one who was not only an estimable private citizen ever going about doing good, but who as an officer, holding important public positions was painstaking, zealous and independent. They who knew him only by report recognized him as a man whom no influence or inducement could turn from duty. In the discharge of sometimes unpleasant work, because he had to keep up to the mark those whom he respected, and with whom he was intimate he was as stern and faithful as with the meanest citizens. If ever anyone acted solely from a sense of duty, and was uninfluenced by private or personal considerations, that man was Dr E.S. Hall. The consequence was that from the knowledge of his sheer integrity of purpose he could carry out changes from which anyone else would have had to shrink, and this, whether as a paid officer or a volunteer for it is to his credit - though the fact is not so well known as it should have been - that while the depressed state of the Public Treasury seemed to Parliament to necessitate his services being dispensed with, he afterwards continued as earnest and zealous a guardian of the public health, as when he had been receiving a salary as a Government officer, and both the Colonial and the Municipal authorities felt so strongly the worth of his services, that they voted him a salary as soon as their finances would afford it. That the recompense was not equal to the work was universally felt, and thus on the occasion of the celebration of the 50th anniversary of his marriage, his services received such a recognition from the public as has been accorded few or none of Tasmania's most gifted and valuable

²² Mercury, June 13, 1881.

²³ Mercury, Aug. 13, 1881.

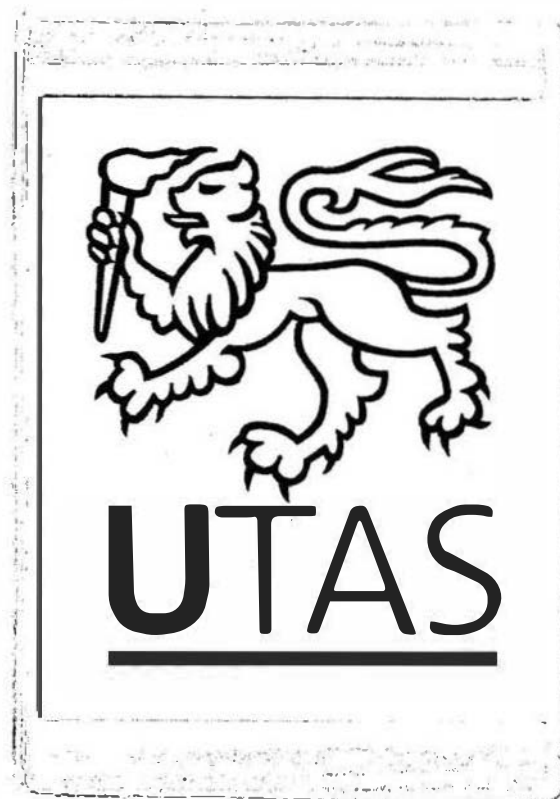
public men. Such an outburst of a peoples' sense of duty performed has been accorded few public men²⁴

It was a fitting tribute to a man who had devoted his life to the service of his fellow man - a tribute, as this story is, to a great Tasmanian humanitarian.



²⁴ Mercury, Aug. 1, 1881.

APPENDICES



THE HALL FAMILY

EDWARD SWARBRECK HALL was survived by his wife, Mary, who died in Hobart in her 81st year on November 25, 1887; also by his son, Leventhorpe Michael, who was a draughtsman in the Lands and Survey Department, and by his five daughters: Mary Jane, who, as Sister Mary Agnes, became a Sister of Charity at St. Joseph's Convent in Hobart on January 14, 1875, and died in 1934 within three weeks of her 100th birthday; Victoria who died in London, aged 96, Anne, Anastasia and Josephine, all of whom died in Hobart.

According to Father Cullen, the girls were all artistic, fond of painting and drawing, and keenly interested in literature, especially poetry. For some years Anne and Anastasia kept a library in Collins Street. However, none of Hall's children married and the family died out.

ILLUMINATED ADDRESS

On the Occasion of the GOLDEN WEDDING ANNIVERSARY of
E.S. and M. HALL, June 8th, 1881.

Among your sincere and numerous friends we have come to offer you our most hearty congratulations on this jubilee of your marriage day.

To few is vouchsafed the privilege of celebrating their Golden Wedding, and fewer still can take the long retrospect of fifty years of wedded life with the comforting assurance that, during that long interval, they have enjoyed the respect and confidence of all that knew them.

When you recall, as doubtless you often do, that 8th June, 1831, with all life's vicissitudes before you, it must be a source of extreme joy to you to know that your union for half a century has been a source of happiness to yourselves, a blessing to your family, and great benefit to the community with which you have been connected.

Descendants from a common stock that for centuries adorned the 'faire north countrie' of old England, and transplanted during the spring time of your days in this Southern land, you have been true to your ancient lineage. Associated as you have been with every benevolent work that tends to alleviate distress, raise the fallen, or defend the weak, your name is held in honour by all classes and conditions of your fellow citizens.

Doubtless your future walk along the vale of life in the evening of your days will be serene and happy. May it also be long as your most affectionate family, and your devoted friends can wish.

Dear Dr and Mrs Hall, on this day of your Golden Wedding, kindly accept our warmest congratulations and believe us to be sincere admirers of the noble example you have given as parents and citizens, of your consistent conduct as members of your Church, of your ardent love for your fellow man, and your rigid adherence at all times to what you considered right in itself, and just and kind in its relation to all others. We also beg your acceptance of the accompanying purse of sovereigns, as some small acknowledgement of your public services and your private worth.

Signed by the Mayor on behalf of the subscribers.

Courier, January 1, 1858. Gluten Committee of the Royal Society.

A meeting of the Royal Society was held on December 31, 1857, to discuss the results of the experiments. These were limited to examining English, South Australian and Tasmanian flours. 19 samples were tested.

English	3
South Australian	4
Tasmanian	12

Results

Dry gluten in English flour:	Maximum	11.3%
	Minimum	6.8%
Mean of the whole series of experiments		8.942%
Dry gluten in Adelaide flour:	Maximum	14.6%
	Minimum	7.5%
Mean of all the experiments		10.47%
Dry gluten in Tasmanian flour:	Maximum	15.2%
	Minimum	7.3%
Mean of the series		10.059%

At this meeting Hall said the Secretary had not supplied him with samples to operate upon, and that he had not been summoned to more than one or two meetings. He had, therefore, been forced to procure his own samples and conduct his own experiments. At this meeting Miller proposed the press be allowed into meetings, but this suggestion was negatived on January 12, 1858. Hall then stated he would attend no more meetings until the press was admitted.

HEALTH REPORT - An Example

ANALYSIS OF THE OBSERVATORY RECORDS FOR MARCH, 1864, IN CONJUNCTION WITH THOSE OF BIRTHS, DEATHS, &C.

By E. SWARBRECK HALL.

The pleasant weather which so generally prevailed this month, excited almost universal commendation. To the sanitarian alone was the mischievous conditions palpable, which has made this month the most fatal to life of any March during the previous seven years.

Atmospheric pressure was so continuously high that the mean for the month, 30.109, is +.252 above the 20 years' adopted standard mean, and greater than that of any March on record. Only three times in the previous 23 years, has any month of the twelve, exceeded the present month in pressure, i.e., July 1850, 30.113; July 1860, 30.193; August 1860, 30.160. The maximum 30.497 was attained on the 26th and was never so high in any March of the previous 23 years. The minimum was 29.580 on the 14th, which is also the highest minimum record for this month during the same period. The month's range .917 of an inch, therefore, occurred in twelve days, and is not remarkable for its extent; 1856 and 1859, both had a greater range. The greatest movement of the barometer was a rise of +.375 of an inch, between the 7 a.m. observations of the 25th and 26th. Only six times during the month did the daily perturbations exceed the fifth of an inch. It is almost an unexceptionable rule, that continuously high atmospheric pressure is accompanied with excessive mortality.

The wind-force was 52.46 lbs., which is 2.50 lbs. less than the March average. Fortunately the ocean winds had greatly the preponderance both in number and force. Northerly winds were much below the average in both respects. At seven o'clock in the morning, wind from northerly points of the compass prevailed for 27 out of the 31 days. At 1 p.m., they were only noted 7 times, at sun-set 9 times, so that the sea-breezes kept up a good supply of Ozone, and counteracted to some extent the injurious effects of drought, high solar temperature and excessive atmospheric pressure. The strongest wind recorded had 5.20 lbs. pressure to the square foot, and was registered at 7 a.m. of the 15th. But at an earlier period of the same day a hurricane blew, with a force of 20.83 lbs and did considerable damage to buildings, shipping, and especially fruit trees. It was a north-wester, but not a hot-wind.

The temperature mean was 60.30 degrees, which is +.32 only above the 20 years' mean for March. Nevertheless it was colder than any March since 1859, when it was 58.20 degrees. The mean deduced from the maximum and minimum self-registering thermometers, differed less than usual from the former, being only 61.04 degrees. The maximum temperature of the month was only 81 degrees, and occurred on the 11th and is considerably below that of any March since 1854. The minimum 43 degrees was noted on the 4th, 22nd, and 26th. The months' range, 38 degrees, is less than has happened in any March since 1854.

The daily range of temperature had a mean of 20.32 degrees, which is only +.28 above the 20 years' average, though it is +5.32 higher than March, 1863, had. The greatest range on any day, was only 29 degrees on the 22nd. Every March since 1854 has had a higher maximum than this. The smallest movement of the thermometer on any day was 13 degrees, and recorded on the 3rd and 16th. Shade temperature, therefore, in all its variations, was not inimical to health.

The mean of the solar-thermometer was, 107.87, which is +4.86 degrees, above the average of the previous 8 years, and, +12.23 degrees, higher than March, 1863, had. The long continuance of almost cloudless skies, as will be seen hereafter, accounts for this unusual abundance of sunshine. The maximum, 124, occurred on the 11th; the minimum, 74, was noted on the 19th, however, there were only six days altogether on which this thermometer indicated a lower temperature than 100.

Terrestrial-radiation mean was 47.50 degrees, being -.88 of a degree, less than the '8 years' average, and -3.58 degrees lower than 1863 had. The maximum occurred on the 11th, and was 56.5 degrees, the minimum was recorded on the 6th and 22nd, being 39 degrees.

The total rain precipitated during the month was only 1.26 inches to the square foot, which is -.26 less than the March average, and -3.61 inches less than fell in March last year. There were only four rainy days, being -6.37 days below the average number for 8 years of March. The downfall on the 3rd was .83 of an inch, and thoroughly scoured the streets and gutters. Again on the 14th there was just rain enough to make the channels flow gently. On the other two days only enough fell to lay the dust, promote decomposition, and thereby pollute the atmosphere. Snow was never noted on Mount Wellington during the month.

The total of spontaneous evaporation was 2.94 inches.

Elastic force of vapor had a mean of 390, which exceeds the 20 years' average by +35. Four times only in 23 years, has the elastic force of vapor in March exceeded that of the present month.

Humidity mean was 74, being $-1\frac{1}{2}$ less than the 20 years' average, but -4 below that of March last year.

Cloud mean 4.05 is below that of any March in the previous 23 years, except 1841, which had the decimals less. The 20 years' mean is +1.36 above the present month.

Ozone mean, notwithstanding so many unfavorable atmospheric conditions, was +.06 above the month's average, being 6.96. To the predominance of breezes from the ocean points of the compass, we owe this remarkable purity. Nevertheless, March 1863, owing to its copious rainfall, had more than one degree more for its ozone mean. The range of the present month was from maximum 8.5, to minimum 5.

Electricity had 21 positive indications, with a maximum tension of .75. Negative had 39 records, with a maximum tension of 6.5. There was only one day, the 14th, on which electricity was "nil".

The deaths for this month exceed in number those of any March during the previous seven years; but the previous four months were all below the average, and the total deaths in the first quarter of 1864 is less by 30 1-7th than the average of the corresponding quarters of the previous seven years. In the following table the deaths are arranged in groups of ages, and contrasted with those of the minimum March, and the previous maximum, as well as that of the foregoing month of February:-

March 1864.	Ages	Minimum year, March 1859.	Maximum March '59	Feb. 1864.
25	Under 1 year	15	26	10
13	1 to 5	9	17	4
2	5 to 20	4	3	1
11	20 to 45	8	7	11
13	45 to 60	8	5	8
9	60 and above	4	8	13
73		48	66	47

The deaths under five years of age are 38, or rather more than half of the total mortality. February had less than one third, but March, 1858, had nearly two-thirds. March 1859, the minimum year, had exactly one-half of the total deaths under five years of age.

In the Zymotic class of Diseases, the deaths were 35. The greatest proportion of these (26) were bowel complaints. The preceding month of February had only 3 deaths in the Zymotic class.

In the Constitutional class the deaths were eight, two of them from consumption, but neither native born Tasmanians.

In the class of Local Diseases the total was 19; of these eight belonged to the order of Diseases of the Brain and Nervous System; four to the Circulatory System; two only to the Respiratory System; two to the Digestive System; two to the Urinary System; one to the Reproductive System. In the class of Developmental Diseases, the deaths were eight, two of them from old age, respectively 86 and 88 years old.

In the class of Violent Deaths, &c., the deaths were three. The Inquests were five. In the first week of the month 12 deaths took place; in the second week 20; in the third 18; in the fourth 16; on the last three days 7. On five days of the month there was not a single death. The greatest number on any day, was 5, on the 18th and 24th. The greatest number on any three consecutive days, was 12, on the 9th, 10th, 11th, and 24th, 25th, 26th. The most fatal period of the month, was, the six days, 6th to 11th inclusive, when 21 deaths occurred.

The registered births were 58, being 21 less than March, 1863, had

In all the registration districts of Tasmania, the deaths registered for the quarter ended 31st March, 1864, are only 340. 1863, had 390; 1862, 387; 1861, 397; 1860, 440; 1859, 451; 1858, 497; the average of the six years being 427, or nearly 20 per cent. more than the first quarter of the present year had. The gradual diminution of deaths yearly, in this the most fatal season of the year to life, is a remarkable fact; particularly when considered in relation to the annually increasing proportion of the Tasmanian born constituents of the total population, to the rest; and, also, the absolute numerical increase on the whole. The inference to be legitimately drawn from these facts, is, that the rate of mortality in the native born population will be very much less than that of their British parents, and very much less than that of British children of corresponding ages. The deaths then, in this, the usually most fatal quarter of the year, are for the whole island, at the very low rate of about $14\frac{1}{2}$ per thousand per annum, being half per cent. less than that of the healthiest registration district of England and Wales.

It is worthy of note to remark, that while the month of March has been so much more unfavorable to health in Tasmania than February and January were, this difference did not exist on the Australian Continent. March, in Victoria, was (I gather from the weekly health reports of its able Registrar-General) quite as favorable as the two previous months.

It becomes therefore an interesting problem to solve, (by ascertaining the peculiar climatic differences during the period), what atmospheric condition or conditions varied so much, as to give the clue to the cause ? In the absence yet of the published meteorological tables for Victoria, I cannot make a rigid comparative analysis, but generally I believe, the greater rain-falls on the Australian continent, contrasted with ours so much below the mean, affords one striking exemplification of the probable cause or causes.

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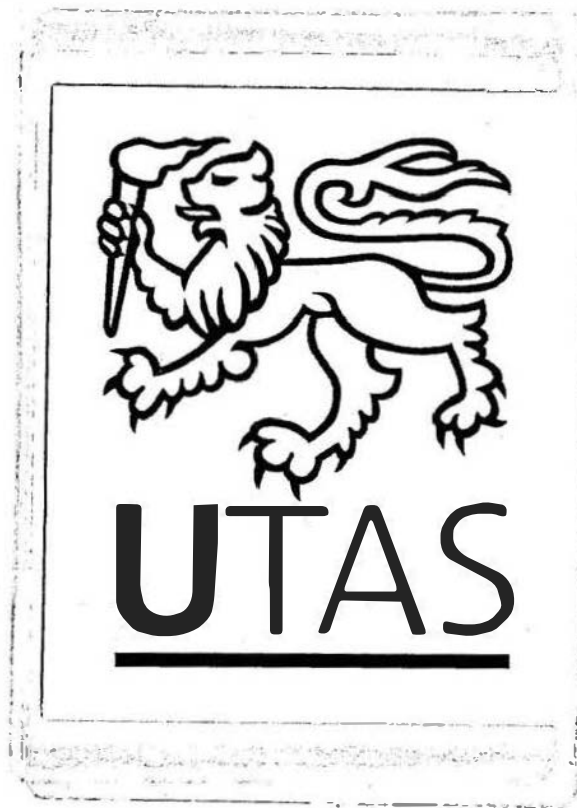
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